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CHRIST

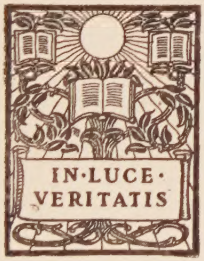
THE BEGINNINGS OF DOGMA

BY

JOHANNES WEISS

OF HEIDELBERG

TRANSLATED BY V. D. DAVIS, B. A.



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TRANSLATOR'S PREFATORY NOTE

THE following pages are a translation of 'Christus: Die Anfänge des Dogmas' (1909), contributed by Professor Weiss to the New Testament series of the Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher, published by J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), of Tübingen. As supplementing the exposition of this handbook, the following publications by Professor Weiss, which have since appeared, may be noted:—

'Paulus und Jesus' (Berlin: Reuther u. Reichard). English translation in Harper's Library of Living Thought.

'Jesus im Glauben des Urchristentums' (J. C. B. Mohr). Reprinted from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Christian Students' Conference of German Switzerland, March 22-24, 1909, in Aarau.

'Jesus von Nazareth, Mythus oder Geschichte?' (J. C. B. Mohr). Lectures, with controversial reference to Kalthoff, Drews, and Jensen, at the Theological Holiday Session in Berlin, March 31, April 1, 1910.

Reference should also be made to the commentary on the Three Earliest Gospels by Professor Weiss in the 'Schriften des N.T., neu übersetzt u. für die Gegenwart erklärt' (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht. 2nd ed., 1907), of which he is the Editor.

V. D. D.

BOURNEMOUTH,
24 December, 1910

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INTRODUCTION

'WHAT think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?'—such is still the burning question by which the Church is divided, many earnest Christians troubled, and not a few conscientious people kept from any nearer relation to the person of Jesus and his religion. In the following pages no attempt will be made to give a final answer to this question. The author does not feel himself in the least called to press his own convictions on this point upon others. But he does hold it to be desirable that even non-theologians, those at least who are in earnest and not afraid of a little trouble, should come to a clear understanding as to what the earliest witnesses of our religion actually taught concerning the person of Christ, what the original meaning really was of those old difficult and obscure words 'Son of God' and

'Son of Man,' 'Lord' and 'Messiah' and what conviction of faith the first confessors intended thereby to express.

There are many to-day who joyfully confess their faith in 'the Only-begotten Son of God,' who yet have only a faint conception of what the words are intended to signify. Many a debate on the 'Deity of Christ' is altogether ineffectual, simply because the disputants do not understand what is meant by the expression they so confidently use. Very likely the opponents in this matter are much nearer to one another than they think, only each is attaching an entirely different meaning to the words he uses. Many think that when they utter the name 'Son of God,' that is sufficient and everyone must know without further explanation what is meant. And yet there is hardly a religious conception that from the first has been so ambiguous. There is hardly anything in the world over which men have disputed so passionately as over the deity and the humanity of Jesus. And the cause of this is not that on the one side were believers and on the other unbelievers, or even malignant and obdurate men, but that in these doctrines there are difficult

problems involved, in which even the most honest intention may go astray.

There are, thank God, multitudes of Christians who know nothing of these errors and contentions, and far be it from us to desire their initiation into this labyrinth. Whoever in this matter has gained a conception which he finds comforting and satisfying, in which he is calm and happy, let him hold to it, and not allow any reasonings concerning Christ, or any theological contention, to break in upon the peace of his soul. And let him put down this little book at once, for there is nothing it desires less than to bring confusion to convinced Christians, sure of their way.

But those to whom the 'Deity of Christ' has become a problem, I invite to accompany me in a consideration of our oldest Sources. Our purpose will be to gain a knowledge of the beginnings of the doctrine of Christ, the Son of God, the beginnings of Christological dogma; to understand how the early Christians came to give just this expression, in formula and doctrine, to what they possessed and reverenced in Christ, and how far these formulas and doctrines were fitted to give effectual expression to their thought and feeling.

The more deeply one penetrates into the beginnings of Christology the greater is one's astonishment at the rapidity with which very divers views became united in a single highly complex and difficult doctrine. There is hardly a trace of gradual development; almost at once the scheme of the Christology was completed; already in the New Testament the principal conceptions of the later dogma are essentially present, though to some extent only in germ; and there one detects already all the difficulties, which the later church had to face. How did this happen? The answer of recent theology is as follows: the speedy development of the Christology to the loftiest and most far-reaching affirmations was due to the fact that *before* the appearance of Jesus there was a Christology, i.e., a doctrine of the Messiah, or at least the material for a Christology, already in existence, both among the Jews and the Hellenists; and the moment that in the person of Jesus the Messiah was found, these scattered elements, which lacked only such a centre of cohesion, shot together like crystals about their nucleus. There was hardly need for any special consideration; the same affirmations

made hitherto concerning the future Messiah were transferred without delay to him who was come, naturally with such modifications as were demanded by the distinctive character of Jesus, and especially by his death on the Cross—and the Christology was in all essentials complete.

This conception broadly taken is undoubtedly correct, and its full significance ought to be realized. The Jewish doctrine of the Messiah, however exquisitely worked out, could never have turned the longing for a better future into joyful certainty that the hope was now fulfilled; nor could all the Hellenistic speculations concerning the loftiest Mediator between God and man awaken that vivid and inspiring conviction that the divine Logos was present in a particular, well-known, and most winning personality. This radical change from speculation to religious insight, from the bare idea of Messiah to the living form of Jesus, this uniting of hitherto separate elements of thought about a fixed centre, presupposes a power of attraction the strength of which it is impossible to over-estimate. It is hardly conceivable how the first confessors could venture to declare one who had been shamefully

crucified to be the regnant Messiah; it is still more difficult for us to understand how their successors could without scruple identify this Jesus with the divine Soul of the world, creative and active from all eternity. How tremendous must have been the mediate or immediate influence of the personality of Jesus on the souls of his followers, that they were ready to believe such things of him and to die for their faith! Thus at the foundation of the doctrine of Christ, in every stage of its development, there is a belief in Jesus, into the feeling of which we must enter, even where, as is often the case, it appears buried in speculation.[1] If in what follows we are obliged sometimes to enter into particulars of doctrine very foreign to our modes of thought, we must not forget that these are after all but the manifold expressions of the one conviction, that in the person of Jesus was given the highest that is conceivable, the ultimate fulfilment of all prophecy and hope, the self-manifestation of God to the world, final and not to be surpassed, the absolute 'Revelation.'

[1] Cf. in this connexion the author's address 'Jesus in the Faith of Primitive Christianity' (p. 2).

Chapter I

THE FAITH OF THE PRIMITIVE COMMUNITY

Concerning the religion of the earliest Jewish-Christian community we have no *direct* witnesses, for the letters of Peter and James we can no longer regard as genuine writings of those original apostles. For the pre-Pauline period we have still to refer in the first instance to the letters of Paul. He mentions incidentally what he has received from the primitive community.[1] But even more important are the numerous elements of the oldest primitive Christian thought which he takes up into his theology, without any specific reference, and which as a common Christian substratum are clearly distinguished by the eye of research from the 'specifically Pauline' doctrines, which are more Hellenistic in tone. In the same

[1] I Cor. 15^{3} ff.

way all other documents of the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic age contain such primitive Christian features, which lead us back to the standpoint of the earliest community. To this class we reckon in particular the speeches of the first part of the Book of Acts. For while they may belong to a later period, in their Christology especially they contain very ancient ideas.

1. The Messiah

The earliest form of Christ-belief is expressed in the sentence: 'Jesus is the Messiah.' Such is the language of the first disciples to their Jewish hearers. Who this Jesus is, there is no need for them to say. The people know the 'Prophet' mighty in word and deed,[1] 'who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,'[2] and whom the chiefs of the people have now put to death. Of this Jesus they say 'He is the Messiah.' But how absurd such a declaration must have seemed to those who heard it! On this point one cannot be too clear.

We know the 'Messianic hope' of Judaism, with its bold fantastic pictures, with its fervour

[1] Luke 24^{19}, 7^{16}, and repeatedly. [2] Acts 10^{38}.

and fanaticism ; but when we feel the pulse of this eagerly nourished hope, it seems to us feverish. It is not a calm certainty, harmoniously pervading the whole life, it is a convulsive excitement, by means of which an elusive deliverance was sought from the desolation and pain of the present. Incidentally, in the midst of all the eloquence concerning the hope of Israel a profound hopelessness finds utterance. When is all this to happen ? No one knows ; there may still have to be endless waiting. ' Blessed is he who shall be alive in those days, and shall see the salvation of Israel ' [1] ; but no one dares to hope that he himself will be among those happy ones. And now there come into the midst of these hopeless men of hope a band of people who with joyous and enthusiastic conviction declare : ' We have found the Messiah, he is come ; the glorious time of consummation is dawning, the kingdom of God is at the door ! '

We can understand how these people seemed a mere drunken crew to those who gathered about them, as they spoke with a new tongue—that of which their heart was full. In the judgment of the crowd nothing whatever was changed—the

[1] Psalms of Solomon 17[44].

same servitude, the same uneventful monotony of an unsatisfying daily life, and God as far off as ever—and these people speak of 'mighty deeds of God'! In the midst of a cowed and melancholy race joy, praise, and thanksgiving to God are the prevailing note of their mood and of their gatherings.[1]

As we look at this new movement in the light of history, the essential thing is just that which to the other Jews seemed strange and incomprehensible. In nothing else is the very heart of this religion so clearly brought to light as in the joyous, confident certainty that the day of salvation has dawned. That is the common feeling, which pervades all the books of the New Testament, and he who does not keenly sympathize with it cannot understand them. It cannot be too often repeated, that Christianity did not gain its victory by any incomparable new doctrine, attractive and convincing beyond any other; on the contrary, what was new in the doctrine was the most serious stumbling-block to Jew and Gentile alike, and the rest was by no means unheard of among the wise men of Greece and

[1] Acts 2^{46}.

the scribes of Israel. No, it was the new flood of religious conviction that was irresistible and incontrovertible, the strength and certainty of victory in Apostles and teachers, the joyousness and blessedness which irradiated the life of even the humblest member of the community, the martyr's readiness to suffer and fearlessness in death.

It is therefore all the more important for us to recognize on what this conviction of the earliest witnesses rested. How was it that the sorrow for the death of Jesus turned so quickly and suddenly into exultant joy? The disciples, who deserted their Master in Gethsemane, Peter, who denied him, James, who had looked with critical eye upon his brother, the general body of followers, to whom the crucifixion of Jesus was such a bitter disappointment—all, regardless of scorn and enmity, now confess: 'And yet he is the Messiah.' How is that revulsion of feeling to be explained?

The New Testament sources know of only one ground for this sudden flaming up of enthusiasm in the very days of deepest sorrow—the appearances of the Risen One, of which Paul[1] and the Gospels tell. The miracle of the resurrection is

[1] I Cor 15[5-7].

for them proof of the Messiahship of Jesus. That is very characteristic of ancient modes of thought. While to us moderns miracle is matter for questioning, the ancient is a ready and thorough believer; to him it is not difficult to conceive, but quite a matter of course, that the Deity should reveal himself by miraculous deeds. A new religion especially, to claim credibility, must manifest itself in exceptional divine deeds. Thus for the early Christians the resurrection of Christ is the fundamental fact, on which everything else is based. We do not here discuss the question, how the disciples came to this conviction. The essential point is that to them it was the most certain thing in the world, needing no further proof, but itself the complete proof of the Messiahship of Jesus.

Yet we must add that however significant the appearances of the Lord may have been, they could not alone have produced the faith for which these men laid down their lives. Even the most positive faith in miracle must assume that the souls to whom these experiences were given by God, must in some way have been prepared for the great things they were to experience. A

foundation was already laid, on which there could be further building, in the memories of what they had experienced in long intercourse with Jesus and the ineffaceable image of his personality. Though it may all have been for a time overshadowed by the impressions of the Passion, even though a time may have come when they actually doubted Jesus—it is inconceivable that the shock was finally destructive of their faith. It would be thinking too meanly of the personality of Jesus to assume that by his death all that he had built up in the souls of his disciples was overthrown. Can his influence have been so weak, the force of his personality so feeble ?

We may at least say that if there had been in them any shadow of doubt as to the transparency of Jesus, if they had noted in him even the faintest breath of an ambitious, self-glorifying, irreverent temper, the Easter experiences would not have had power to overcome these impressions and keep the disciples, through persecution and the bitterness of death, firm in their loyalty to Jesus. The purity and truth of Jesus were to them such unquestioned certainty, that nowhere in the New Testament writings is there the least trace of any

attempt or desire to defend or prove his innocence. From this centre of conviction they gained their strength to overcome the 'stumbling-block of the cross.' However great the consequence of the appearances for the first calming of their faith, the firm anchorage of what we call *moral* conviction was only possible, because the pure and sublime image of Jesus retained a permanent power over the souls of his disciples and banished every doubt.

Further: How was it possible for the disciples to expect their fellow-countrymen to accept what must seem to them the quite inadmissible declaration, that the Crucified was the Messiah, the King of Israel, and how could they persuade themselves to acknowledge their own adhesion to so paradoxical and bold a proposition? Could there be a greater contrast than that between Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified, and the 'King Messiah'? Why could they not be content with the declaration that Jesus was a prophet, the prophet, it may be, promised in Deut. 18^{18}, as the successor and equal of Moses: 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he

shall speak unto them all that I shall command him'?[1] What made them burden their cause with a thesis so difficult and almost impossible to maintain? They must have had strong grounds. It is not enough to assume that the enthusiastic mood of the people at the entry into Jerusalem first suggested the thought to them, or that they boldly took the inscription on the cross as their symbol; they must certainly have been convinced that in making this announcement they were in accord with the mind of Jesus himself. That is to say, they must have known or believed that Jesus in some form or other regarded himself as the fulfiller of the prophecy, the final messenger of God to Israel, in some sense or other the Messiah. At the very least, the general impression of the character of Jesus must have been such that they felt him to be One sent of God, who spoke because he was moved of God; if they had noted in him anything affected, vain, or fanatical, they would not have been true to him after his death nor have dared to make such lofty claims for him. They must have recognized in him, spite of Gethsemane, an unbroken confidence and clearness of vision,

[1] Acts 3^{22}.

without wavering or doubt, or how could they so whole-heartedly have maintained his cause, and even acclaimed him King of the coming time!

Thus the faith of the first disciples was rooted not merely in the Easter experiences, it goes back beyond Golgotha to the impress of his personality. If he had not been the mighty one he was, filled entirely of God and in league with him, pure and true, manifestly trusted and chosen of God, they would not have dared to say of him that 'the promises of God were in him Yea and Amen.'

The question, in what sense Jesus himself spoke of his mission or his nature is here intentionally set on one side. That may be kept for consideration in a separate treatise. Here we are only concerned to show that the earliest Christ-belief reaches back ultimately to the life of Jesus.

But once more let us repeat: the disciples themselves appealed to the resurrection as the decisive proof of the Messiahship.

2. Resurrection and Exaltation. The Heavenly King

What then is the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus? At Easter we think above all of the

overcoming of death by life, we celebrate Jesus as the first-born of them that are risen, to whom he has opened the gates of life[1]—but in the lines of thought we are here following, this aspect of the resurrection falls surprisingly into the background[2]; the dominant thought is that the reawakening signifies a justification, a rehabilitation of him who was rejected by the Jews.[3] Herein did God acknowledge his Chosen One. Indeed, the significance of the resurrection is altogether rather thrust into the background by the fact that (particularly in the speeches in Acts) it is for the most part linked in thought with the exaltation of Jesus in heaven, at the right hand of God. For so only is the work of God complete. There are even passages in the New Testament where the successive steps of thought overleap, as it were, the resurrection. When Jesus says to the malefactor, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,' and when in the Fourth Gospel he repeatedly speaks of going to the Father, without any reference to the reawakening from death, we recognize that the exaltation is the really essential

[1] Rom. 6^2 ff.; I Cor. 15. [2] Acts 2^{24}.
[3] Acts 3^{15}; Mark 12^{10} f.

thing, and the reawakening is regarded merely as a means to that end.

To this belief in the exaltation there are numerous parallels in Judaism and Hellenism as well as in the earlier mythology. Here the Egyptian conceptions should first of all be mentioned,[1] according to which the dead man flies up, as a bird, to heaven, to his brothers the gods. 'He goes to heaven full of the vigour of life, that he may see his Father, that he may see Re.' And the Sun God receives him with these words: 'I give thee thy speech and thy body, and thou receivest the form of a god.' He makes his body luminous like that of the celestial beings. 'Homer knows of individual men who are exalted or snatched away, body and soul together, to immortal life (Menelaus), and the later Epic also tells of those who (like Memnon, Achilles), brought back from death to life, now live on in indissoluble union of body and soul.'[2] Further, we must add to these examples the conceptions of the apotheosis of Hercules and Æsculapius, above all,

[1] Erman, 'Egyptian Religion,' p. 90 f. English Translation, p. 88.

[2] Rohde, 'Psyche' I, p. 97.

the deification of dead rulers both in the Hellenistic and Roman worship of the sovereign.[1] On Old Testament Jewish ground we may compare the ascension to heaven of Elijah,[2] the translation of Enoch,[3] the ascension of Moses.[4] These and numerous other analogies may teach us how easily the ancient—and not the oriental alone—took to the thought of the lifting up of deified men to the sphere of the gods.

But all these heathen analogies only illustrate one side of the primitive Christian thought. That Jesus is now raised beyond human nature, with all its limitations, that he has experienced a mighty exaltation of being, that he lives with God in blessed peace and in 'glory,' 'beneath the wings of the Lord of spirits,' that, in the language of the history of religions, he has experienced an 'apotheosis'—all this we follow and recognize as of real significance; and yet it is far surpassed by other thoughts. The faith of the first community proceeds at once to the

[1] Cf. the highly instructive treatise of Kornemann, Beiträge zur alten Geschichte I, 1902.

[2] II Kings 2^{11}.

[3] Ecclus. 44^{16}, 49^{14}.

[4] Cf. Kautzsch, Apokryphen u. Pseudepigraphen II, 311 ff.

further conclusion, as though it were inevitable: He is at the right hand of God, exalted to a joint-dominion, sharer of the throne of God,[1] *he is made both Lord and Messiah.*[2]

That sentence is in Peter's Pentecost address. It is the earliest Christological confession, which already in the time of Paul, and still more at the time of the composition of the Book of Acts, had been long since outstripped by phrases of loftier claim. It affirms that Jesus only *became* Messiah through the resurrection and exaltation. Therefore previously, during his lifetime, as he went through the land teaching and healing, he had not yet attained that rank; then he was called prophet, teacher, Master—but not yet Messiah, i.e., King of Israel. Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi could therefore only be understood as a bold anticipation of the glorious future—in spiritual vision he saw the crown upon the head of the fugitive; and similarly the confession of Jesus before the high-priest could only signify that he confidently expected to 'sit at the right hand of the power of God.'[3]

[1] Rev. 3^{21}. [2] Acts 2^{36}.

[3] Luke 22^{69}. Cf. on this passage the 'Schriften des N.T.'

But this conception of the heavenly Messiah as king involves a significant change in the Messianic idea. 'Messiah,' i.e., the anointed, the Anointed of the Lord,[1] or as it stands in Peter's confession in Luke 9^{20}, the anointed of God— is king of the last age, to which the whole history of the people, nay, of the world, points, to which all prophecy and all hopes are directed, a veritable king indeed. A Messiah without dominion, an anointed one who is not king, that is an impossible thought. When, therefore, the early community declared Jesus to be the Messiah, though he was entirely non-political, and his people, so far from raising him to the throne, put him to death, the conception of the Messiah was by that very fact altered; it was, so to say, transposed to a higher key.

This will be clear to us, if we compare the new conceptions with the remaining fragments of the old. There were, as it seems, Jewish-Christian circles in which the hope was not abandoned of the establishment of an earthly kingdom of David. In Luke's history of the childhood, it would seem to be quite seriously meant, when it is prophesied of Jesus, that God 'shall give unto him the

[1] Luke 2^{26}.

throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.'[1] They seem actually to have hoped of him 'salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us.'[2] Similarly the author of the Book of Revelation expects of him who is now seated with God upon the throne,[3] that after his return with power[4] and the destruction of all enemies, he as King of kings and Lord of lords,[5] would shepherd the heathen with a brazen staff and set up his throne upon earth for a thousand years.[6] Other Jewish-Christians had learnt to relinquish this hope of an earthly kingdom of Messiah, as e.g., the author of the Matthew-Gospel, who interprets the name 'Jesus' quite non-politically, as referring to the 'saving of his people from their sins.'[7] His kingdom, however, he conceives as involving heavenly dominion over the world: 'to me is given all power in heaven and on earth.' For him the 'kingdom of the Messiah' is in no sense any longer of the future, but already realized in the present in the community.[8] That is, in the stricter sense, the actual field of his dominion.

[1] Luke 1^{32} f. [2] Luke 1^{71}. [3] Rev. 3^{21}. [4] Rev. 19^{11}.
[5] Rev. 19^{16}. [6] Rev. 20^{4}. [7] Matt. 1^{21}. [8] Matt. 13^{41}.

For Paul also the dominion of the Messiah began with his exaltation. 'On the ground of the resurrection from the dead,' by which Jesus was finally removed from connexion with earthly things, 'he was installed as Son of God with power'[1]; in that exaltation God gave to him 'the name which is above all names,' i.e., the name of 'Lord.'[2] In speaking thus, Paul stands entirely on the ground of the earliest Christology, as we have clearly seen from Acts 2^{36}.

This is made clearer to us by the expositions of Col. 1^{13} and I Cor. 15^{24}f. The dominion of Messiah signifies not only an exaltation of rank for him, but above all the beginning, full of promise, of a tremendous world-revolution. For the power of darkness,[3] the kingdom of Satan, who rules this world like a god,[4] the hour of doom struck, when in the resurrection of Jesus, God triumphed over the ruler of this world.[5] By the installation of Jesus as king he founded a new organization, powerful for victory, by which the kingdom of the devil was to be completely overthrown. Into this new 'kingdom' the Christians,

[1] Rom. 1^{4}. [2] Phil. 2^{9} ff. [3] Col. 1^{13}.
[4] II Cor. 4^{4}. [5] Col. 2^{15}.

rescued by God's grace, are brought, and are permitted to feel themselves safe under the protection of their 'Lord' and King and Advocate;[1] but this small company of the chosen appears so far simply as an island in the midst of the whole structure of this world, an island about which surges the tumult of the demons and the dominion of sin and death. Thus the reign of Christ signifies not blessed rest but conflict: 'He must be king, until he has put all enemies under his feet,' which means 'until he has destroyed all dominion and all power and might —and death as the last enemy.'[2] Then shall he render back his kingly power to God, the Father, and subject himself to him, that God may be all in all.[3] In this picture of the ultimate age it is clearly manifest that the period of the Messiah's dominion is limited in time. In IV Ezra 7^{28} it is estimated as lasting four hundred years, in Rev. 20^{4} a thousand years. How long Paul thought the time would be there is no evidence to show. It is of more consequence for us carefully to consider this whole structure of thought from other sides.

[1] Rom. 8^{29}. [2] I Cor. 15^{24} ff. [3] I Cor. $15^{24, 28}$.

We are so accustomed to the thought of the world-dominion of Christ that we no longer realize how strangely it ought to affect us in the setting of a religion so strictly monotheistic as Christianity, born as it was of Judaism. For the accomplishment of his warfare against spiritual powers ranged against him, and for the exercise and vindication of his rule, God makes use of a being, originally human, whom he has exalted to divine power! When Jesus announces the establishment of the rule of God as close at hand, when the early Christians pray 'Thy kingdom come,' there is not, it would seem, any suggestion of the thought that to this end God would make use of any such instrument. At most, we should expect in accordance with Jewish example, that he would send his legions of angels, and by means of these his hosts accomplish his will. But it is something very different, when here Christ as sharer of the throne of God, almost as 'a second God,' in his Father's place carries out the government of God. We at once perceive that the *form* of this conception, with whatever almost nervous safeguarding of Monotheism (see below), yet borders on the polytheistic or mythologic.

Analogies have been pointed out, e.g., in Babylonian myths. Marduk, who, commissioned by the other gods, overcame Tiamat, for reward is installed as highest god. 'O Marduk, thou wilt be our avenger, we give thee dominion as king over all that is.' No sensible man can or will maintain that this or any similar passage was directly or indirectly the origin of the primitive Christian idea; and yet by such classical examples of mythical thought one may be clearly convinced that the form of this New Testament conception is closely allied to those mythologies. But then it becomes all the more certain that the idea of the heavenly dominion and world conflict of the Messiah cannot have sprung from the original thoughts of primitive Christianity, still less from the religious experience and testimony of Jesus, but that here we have older material of thought taken over and applied to Jesus.

To this assumption we are also led by observing that the earliest Christians had no hesitation in at once exchanging the conception of an earthly Davidic Messiah for that of a heavenly World-ruler and Viceroy of God.

Side by side with the popular notion of Messiah

there must have been another set of ideas at the service of the Jewish-Christians, which immediately came into force, when the other proved to be inapplicable. As a matter of fact we find in the 'Similitudes' of the Book of Enoch[1] the conception that at the end of days that mysterious 'Son of Man' shall be set by God upon the throne of his glory, receive the homage of all angels and spirits,[2] and hold the assize of doom over the kings and powers of the earth[3]: 'He sat down upon the throne of his glory, and the whole assize was given over to him, the Son of Man, and he caused sinners and those who had corrupted the world, to vanish from the face of the earth and be destroyed. They are bound with chains and confined in the gathering-place of their destruction; all their works vanish from the face of the earth. Henceforth shall there be nothing hurtful any more. For that "Son of Man" has appeared and has sat down upon the throne of his glory, and all evil will vanish from before his face and cease to be; but the word

1 Kautzsch, 'Apokryphen u. Pseudepigraphen' II, pp. 258-78.

2 Cf. Phil. 2^{10}f. 3 Cf. especially Chaps. 61-63.

of that "Son of Man" will have power before the Lord of spirits.'[1] In this description the following features agree with the primitive Christian conception of the heavenly Messiah: (1) The 'Son of Man' sits on his (heavenly) throne of glory, set there by God, whether by his side or in his place. (2) He holds the assize over sinners in God's place, 'before' the Lord of spirits. (2) He destroys all sin and everything hurtful from the earth. Cf. I Cor. 15^{26}: As the last enemy death is destroyed.

If, therefore, the title 'Messiah' could only be retained by the help of reinterpretation and transposition to a higher key, it is not surprising that as a name it should fall more and more into the background, especially among the Hellenists, for whom this peculiarly Jewish notion hardly retained any meaning. A sign of this relinquishment is to be noted in the fact that the word *Christos*, originally a (very inadequate) translation of the Hebrew *Maschiach* 'Anointed,' became more and more a proper name, which no doubt among the uneducated was often enough misunderstood as *Chrestos*, 'the gracious one.'

[1] Enoch 69^{27-29}.

Already in the New Testament the process of change from the proper name is begun. In not a few passages in the Pauline letters it may be matter of dispute whether the word still retains its old meaning ; but, in such phrases, e.g., with their rich liturgical intonation, as in Rom. 5^{1}, ^{11}, ^{21} : 'Our Lord Jesus Christ,' the word, as is proved by the added title 'Lord,' has gained the meaning of a proper name.

The more necessary was it to find other titles or names of honour, to express the nature and significance of Christ. We proceed to consider some of these.

3. The Son of God

This most frequent and to us most intimate of the names of honour given to Jesus Christ is at the same time that which has roused the most controversy. While many untheological Christians hold it to be at once perfectly comprehensible, and not open to any doubt as to its meaning, it has in truth even in the New Testament a considerable variety of meanings, and up to the present day it is understood by theologians and laymen alike in very different senses, while by

others it is used in the vaguest manner—with a dim feeling that in some way it expresses the 'secret' of the person of Christ. Thus it is the more important for us to be clear as to the origin of the name. The result will be a surprise to many.

From the earliest times in the East (in Babylon as in Egypt) the kings ranked as gods or of divine origin,[1] and thus 'Son of God' was there very

[1] E. Meyer, *Gesch. d. Altertums*, I 2^2 p. 142, of ancient Egypt: 'The King, the incarnation of Horus, and at the same time of Horus and Seth, suckled by the lion-headed Sechmet, and himself a lion (Sphinx), who strikes down the nations with his paws, is a living god in human form, who holds intercourse with the gods as with his equals. Like them he is lord of life and death; . . . the people approach him with trembling and mysterious awe as before the image of a God, they kiss the dust at his feet; they bring him presents and seek to gain his favour: he is always spoken of as "The God" and utterance of his name is avoided.' p. 105: 'This divinity of the king, which in its origin and growth may go back to a much earlier time is an essential feature in the culture of this epoch. The supremacy of the idea of the state concentrated in a single will finds in it visible expression. . . . The Spirit of the eternal kingdom of God has made his abode in him, as in other cases in sacred animal or fetish; and as when the animal dies he seeks another, so after the death of the ruler he passes on to his successor, whom he himself has begotten, and the goddesses suckled with their milk.' Further concerning the kingdom of Akkad (p. 478): With the subjection of the Amorites Sargon (c. 2500) gained dominion over the 'four quarters of the earth.' His successor therefore calls himself 'King of the four quarters of the world.' 'The

definitely an ancient predicate of the kings, in general use. And this is what we find in the classical passage, Ps. 2^{7-9}. Here the poet represents the King of Israel on the day of his ascent of the throne addressed by God in the following words :

> Thou art my son ; this day have I begotten thee !
> Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for an inheritance,
> The ends of the earth for thy possession.
> With brazen staff shalt thou shatter them (Greek : pasture)
> As potter's vessels break them in pieces.

The author here makes use of forms of expression and images belonging to the ancient court style, of which examples are already found among the Babylonians. On the Cyrus-cylinder are the words : 'Marduk had compassion. Over all the lands he held survey, he considered them and sought a just prince after his own heart, to take him by the hand. Kuras, king of Ansan, did he call by name ; he published his name as ruler over all the world.' So also in Psalm 2 we have the courtly form of expression, transferred from

kingdom of Akkad did actually embrace the chief part of the world known to the Babylonians. The idea of a universal monarchy meets us here for the first time in history in full consciousness.' 'It appears at once in the form in which later it so often returns : the elevation of the ruler to the position of a god.' This conception, foreign to the earlier Babylonian kingdom, was Semitic in its origin.

the circumstances of the great world-realm to the King of Israel. To him also dominion over the world is promised. But what in the case of a little Israelitish prince was mere flattery, without any background of reality, later interpretation naturally transferred without any difficulty to the king of the last age. He is called to be ruler over the whole world.

In the form of address, 'Thou art my son,' we have the Babylonian formula of adoption. From this moment God will be father to the king, and he shall have the power and right of the son of God. The 'begetting' here spoken of is therefore only figurative, but its effect is all the stronger, the more completely a literal meaning is out of the question.

Egyptian parallels[1] can also be furnished to the thought of the divine sonship of kings, though it is there somewhat differently conceived. The particular source of these forms of expression does not concern us here. Enough, that this is an inherited, ancient oriental style. In the nature of things it was not necessary that the king, even though king of the whole world, should

[1] Cf. note on p. 38.

be God's son, but this conception as a matter of fact is there; to oriental feeling he is such, and the ancient reader would at once understand that exaltation to be the Son of God implied endowment with authority to rule.

Now it is very noteworthy that the primitive community took as the standard for their thought a saying, in which the divine sonship of Christ did not date from eternity, nor depend on any special kind of human birth, but began at a definite point of time: 'This day have I begotten thee!' This is the oldest form of the idea of divine sonship, which we call the adoptionist. The sonship to God is not given by nature, but the man Jesus is exalted by a special declaration of will or deed of God to be his son, just as the Messiahship begins on a definite day. To the question, When is this 'to-day'? various answers are given. What the oldest is, we may gather from the analogy of Acts 2^{34-36}. As the other saying of Ps. 110^{1}: 'Sit thou on my right hand,' was fulfilled on the day of the exaltation of Jesus, so also Ps. 2^{7}. A definite authority for the interpretation of 'To-day' as the day of the resurrection we have perhaps in Acts 13^{33}.

But this was not the only way in which the name and the conception of 'the Son of God' was applied to Jesus. While it is true that the exaltation made an epoch for the Messiahship and the divine Sonship, in so far as thereby the actual raising up of the Son of God to his position of power was accomplished,[1] nevertheless the primitive community in its traditions of the life of Jesus gave distinct expression to the thought, that previously God had at least already *chosen* Jesus to be his son, and had consecrated him as Messianic king. The narrative of the baptism of Jesus is the representation in plastic form of this idea. In the voice from heaven we have the divine sonship of Jesus as it were 'antedated.' This is specially clear in Luke's version of the story as it stands in Codex D (Luke 3^{22}), where Ps. 2^{7} is quoted verbatim. According to this version it is at that very moment that the 'adoption,' the ideal 'begetting' of the Son of God takes place. No clearer expression could be given to the old Christological view: a man is now raised to the dignity of a divine ruler. But even in the attenuated form in Mark,[2]

[1] Rom. 1^{4}.

[2] 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.'

expression is given to the thought of a choosing at a point of historical time, even though this may have been before the moment of baptism. In Matt. 3^{17}, the thought appears with its point entirely gone, where the voice from heaven comes in the form of a public proclamation. The reason for this is that meanwhile the divine sonship of Jesus has been still further 'antedated,' namely to the hour of his birth.[1] Thus originally the baptism in Jordan was the birth-hour of the Messiah. This throws light upon Acts 10^{38}: 'God anointed him with holy spirit and power,' where the reference can only be to the anointing as king, as Christ. The anointing of Saul and David by Samuel are Old Testament analogies.[2] What is common to these narratives is that the anointed continue for a time to be bearers of their high calling unknown to the world; so Jesus also remained for a time unrecognized as Messiah; his ascension to the throne took place only after the resurrection. That 'anointing with the spirit' takes the place of anointing with oil is a change rendered necessary by the circumstances, for Jesus did not attain to an earthly, political

[1] Cf. below. [2] I Sam. 10^{1}f.; 16^{13}.

kingdom. On the other hand, with David also the anointing coincides completely with the receiving of the spirit, and with Saul at least partially.

The original tradition of the life of Jesus pictures his whole activity as conditioned by this calling, he was already the chosen Son of God and consecrated king of Israel. On the other hand, the representation is quite definite that Jesus never affirmed his Messiahship by any unmistakable declaration. But the conviction was that his reason for this was simply that he did not wish or was not able to publish the secret of his calling; inwardly he was convinced that he was the chosen 'Son,' and in the circle of his friends he bore witness to this in mysterious inspired words.[1] That this interpretation of the 'Messianic consciousness' of Jesus is in substance historically correct cannot be further demonstrated here. Our purpose was simply to describe the views of the primitive community as to the divine Sonship and Messiahship of Jesus. Of these the essential points are: (*a*) The raising of a man to dominion as Messiah and to Sonship

[1] Matt. 11^{27}.

to God. (*b*) This raising up was accomplished at his exaltation. (*c*) For this, the calling and consecration as king at the baptism in Jordan was a preparation.

4. The Lord

In place of *Christos*, a name of honour which appeared outlandish to the Gentile-Christians, *Kurios* came more and more into use. The parallelism in the sentence Rom. 10^9 is characteristic: 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead . . .' Here, just as in the brief confession of I Cor. 12^3, *Kurios* has taken the place of the Jewish-Christian *Christos*. But it was also undoubtedly the case that already in the primitive Jewish-Christian community the Exalted One was called 'Lord,' 'Our Lord.' A witness to this is the Aramaic formula *Maranatha*,[1] i.e., 'Our Lord comes,' or 'Our Lord, come!'[2] which must have had its origin in the primitive community. So also in Acts 2^{36} the two go together, where it is said that God made Jesus 'both Lord and Christ.'

[1] I Cor. 16^{22}. [2] Rev. 22^{20}.

What is the meaning of this predicate? Its application to the Exalted we must doubtless distinguish from its occasional use in the Gospels, e.g., John 4^{11}, where Jesus is addressed as 'Lord,' simply as a mark of polite consideration, as was customary at that time both among Jews and Greeks. In those cases the address did not imply any confession either of the Messiahship or the divinity of Jesus. With respect to the name *Kurios* also the exaltation of Jesus made an epoch. There cannot be the least doubt that the name has now a *religious* significance. To make clear the religious import of the use of the name 'Lord' by the early Christians, one would have to cite the whole of the New Testament. For in the expression 'Our Lord Jesus Christ' the whole primitive Christian religion is contained in germ. Dutiful obeisance, reverence, and sacred fear lest he should be offended, the feeling of complete dependence in all things,[1] thankfulness and love, trust—in short everything that man can feel towards God, comes in this name to utterance. This is most clearly seen in the invocations of blessing at the opening of the

[1] 'If the Lord will!' I Cor. 4^{19}.

letters. Here 'grace and peace' are prayed for or wished 'from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.' That which is expected from God, the Lord also can impart. This regarding of God and Christ side by side, which exactly corresponds to the enthronement of the two together, is characteristic of primitive Christian piety. As the Christians cry 'Abba, Father,' and pray to him, so there can be no doubt that they also 'prayed' to Christ, in the most definite meaning of that word, not simply in reverent adoration, but also in the form of petition. Of this 'calling upon the Lord'[1] we have single examples in the case of Paul,[2] and of Stephen ;[3] but such prayers were certainly immeasurably more frequent. Thus practically the attitude of the Christians towards Christ was the same as towards God.[4]

At this point, therefore, we witness the decisive departure taken by the faith of the primitive community. This is the beginning of the Christ-belief, the Christ-religion. The moment at which the first Christian sent up his prayer to the exalted Christ, is the birth-hour of that religion which to many Christians up to the present time

[1] Rom. 10^{12}. [2] 2 Cor. 12^{8}. [3] Acts 7^{60}. [4] Cf. 2 Clem. 1^{1}.

appears to be the only true Christianity, alone entitled to the name. Other modern Christians may for their part refuse prayer to Christ, and declare it an aberration; but the historian is bound to say that Christianity from its earliest beginnings, side by side with faith in God as Father, has also proved the veneration of Christ to be to it a perfectly natural form of religion. It may be said that Jesus never even by a single word encouraged or foresaw such adoration of his person; the early Christians, without the slightest misgiving on that score, believed that they were acting in complete accordance with his mind, when they adored him and sang hymns to him '*quasi Deo*.'

That being the case, it is the more noteworthy that a considerable time elapsed before the theoretical conclusion was drawn from the practical worship of Christ, and he was called straight out 'God.'

That the name 'Lord' was applied to the gods from of old and especially by the Hellenists of the period of the Empire, there is abundant material to prove.[1] In particular the pious man, who

[1] Lietzmann, N.T. Handbook, Rom. 10[9], Deissmann, *Licht von Osten*, p. 253 ff.

chose some god as his special patron, called him 'his Lord.'[1] To the Emperors it is applied to express the religious veneration accorded to them. What Paul meant by the term can be seen from I Cor. 8[5]. When he here acknowledges for his part, that there are in fact many (though only so called) 'gods and lords,' his implication is that there are many beings (demons, to his thinking), to whom men offer worship and invocation, addressing them as God or Lord. As opposed to these many 'lords,' particularly perhaps to the worship of the Emperor, the Christians know and venerate only the one *Kurios* Jesus Christ.[2] It is not impossible, though it cannot be clearly proved, that in the mind of Paul the predicate 'lords' stands in a lower grade than 'gods,' so that he would have it applied, maybe, only to deified men, heroes and gods of lower rank. In any case, in the balance of the sentence, 'God the Father' in verse 6 corresponds to the word 'gods' in verse 5, and 'the Lord Jesus Christ' to the word 'lords.' And there can be no doubt (this very passage in another way furnishes the proof) that it is Paul's

[1] Deissmann, 116 ff.; 123 ff. [2] Cf. Deissmann, p. 233 ff.

endeavour, in spite of his setting Christ side by side with God, yet distinctly to mark his subordination.[1] And so it is possible that he the more gladly adopted the name *Kurios*, which came to him from the primitive community, because he could thereby express indeed the divine position of Christ, and the divine veneration accorded to him, and yet could draw a line, by means of which the interval between Christ and God was still preserved.

On this subject he spoke his mind fully and significantly in Phil. 2^{9}ff. We deal with the passage here, because in the main it is still in line with the Christology of Acts 2^{36}. At the exaltation, God gave to Christ 'the name which is above every name,' that in calling upon the name of Jesus every knee should bow, 'of beings in heaven and on earth and beneath the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord—to the glory of God the Father.' The definite and well-known name, which surpasses in weight and power every other name of

[1] So, e.g. 2 Cor. 1^{3}, where he calls God not simply the Father, but also 'the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Cf. Eph. 1^{17}; John 20^{17}.

men or gods, can only be the name *Kurios*, as is clear from the last part of the sentence. Now this word is not only known in the common use of Hellenistic speech, but has in addition a special history in the distinct Judæo-Hellenistic field. The Jews were taught to avoid utterance of the divine proper name *Jahwe* in the sacred text by substituting *Adonai* (Lord). The Greek translators of the Old Testament were, therefore, strictly following Jewish precedent when they rendered the name *Jahwe* by '*Kurios*,' and the frequent conjunction *Jahwe ha elohim* by *Kurios ho theos*, i.e., really 'LORD, *the God*.'[1] *Kurios* without the article is felt to be almost a proper name. When Luther renders this by 'God, the Lord,' the feeling is reversed, and to him 'God' is the proper name. This, then, is the position from which the passage in the letter to the Philippians must be understood, the more so as it would seem to contain reminiscences of such passages as Is. 42^{8}, 45^{22}: 'I am *Kurios ho theos*, that is my name, my glory will I not give to another.' 'Unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue acknowledge God.' These names

[1] So also Luke $1^{32,68}$ etc.

which God jealously guards as his own prerogative, he has now surrendered to Christ, and thus publicly declared that all beings are to bow before him and acknowledge him as Lord. The granting of the name signifies, according to ancient use, endowment with the power which the name denotes. This passage is only another way of saying that God has placed in his hands the dominion of the world and has made him 'Lord of lords, King of kings.' It contains, therefore, substantially the same declaration as that made in Acts 2^{36}, and suggested in I Cor. 8^{5}. But if we are to understand from it that Christ alone by right bears the name *Kurios*, there is here a further implication, in so far as *Kurios* is not merely a general designation of high rank, but a name which has almost become the proper name of God. Christ is thus exalted not into a general circle of divine beings alone, he definitely takes the place of the almighty God. Here, therefore, *Kurios* cannot in any case have a weaker meaning than *Theos*. Yet it is noteworthy that here also Paul endeavours to maintain the position of Monotheism, in that he makes the sentence conclude with the words (which really have no

place in its construction): To the honour of God the Father—this subjection of all beings under God's deputy is also to contribute.

How lofty the range of the predicate 'Lord' may also be gathered from the fact that Paul in occasional citations from the Old Testament applies to Christ without flinching the *Kurios* which there refers to God, e.g., I Cor. 1^{31}, 2^{16}. And as to-day innumerable Christians still read Psalm 23, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' without being clear whether in so doing they think of God or Christ, so the Revelation of John already applied those words to Christ: 'The Lamb will shepherd them and lead them to springs of living water.'[1] And inversely, when Paul says, 'The Lord be with you,' he thinks of Christ, who from his exaltation in heaven guides the whole life of Christians, yet is ever present with them; we, on the other hand, when these words are uttered in the liturgy, are accustomed to think of God. So the use of the name *Kurios* becomes a bridge, leading to the last and loftiest affirmations concerning Christ.

But in the earlier Sources, especially in the

[1] Rev. 7^{17}

case of Paul, the designation of Christ as 'God' is still manifestly avoided; the fear of doing injury to the fundamental monotheistic conception is occasionally here so powerfully at work as to lead to astonishing twistings of thought. Thus in the crescendo of I Cor. 3^{22} (all is yours, ye are Christ's, Christ is God's) the dependence of Christ on God is after all emphasized, which was by no means the original direction of the thought; and similarly in I Cor. 8^{6}, the parallelism of the sentences is weakened, so as not to place Christ too decisively on an equality with God.[1] This being so, it is very astonishing that in the current text of Rom. 9^{5} the following ascription of praise is found, which can only be taken as referring to Christ, 'He who is God over all be blessed for ever!' If the word here were *Kurios*, we should not be surprised. But that the text here gives him a title, which sets him absolutely in the place of God—without any indication of subordination—that is unthinkable. It has therefore been rightly assumed that the text is corrupt. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly genuine, when in John 20^{28} Thomas addresses the Risen One: 'My Lord and

[1] Cf. Phil. 2^{11}.

my God!' So also in I John 5^{20} and Titus 2^{13} Christ is called God. That is due to the predominance of the Hellenistic mode of thought in those later writings of the New Testament. The strictly Jewish foundation of the earliest Christianity is here no longer as strong as it was, feeling is no longer hurt by the appearance of a second deity by the side of God.

5. The Son of Man

The earliest Christian theology having attributed to the Exalted One a divine position in the world and offered him divine veneration, yet without adding actual 'deity' in the full sense of the term, the question arises: To what order of beings was he assigned? It might be argued that he was regarded as one of the Angels, the loftiest of them. And certainly, attributes of the Archangel Michael, the guardian of Israel, were transferred to him, as, e.g., that of intercession in heaven.[1] Yet on the whole there can be no doubt that primitive Christendom distinguished its exalted Lord from the world of angels who were invariably subordinated to him. The more urgent then

[1] Rom. 8^{34}.

becomes the question, what quality of being was attributed to him. The answer must be: Even in his state of exaltation the community regarded Christ as a man, as the heavenly man, endowed with divine glory. It applied to him the prediction concerning the heavenly man, or 'Son of Man.'

It has taken an extraordinary time for Theology to make its way to even a moderately certain comprehension of this mysteriously sounding name. We must here rid ourselves entirely of certain common notions. How often one hears 'Son of Man' spoken with a certain emphasis of tone, as though the name implied that Christ had no desire to be anything more than simply a man, to whom nothing human was foreign. How often is this name cited as against the 'deity' of Christ! But all this is a more or less spiritual importation of meaning, of which the original texts know nothing.

We must, first of all, be quite clear that 'Son of Man' means nothing more than simply 'man.' The clearest proof of this is in Ps. 8[4]: 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou takest his part?' We also say

'the children of men,' and mean simply 'men.' But in the New Testament the name has after all a special meaning, in so far as it is used to designate not any man generally, but one very definite person. Most of the passages go back to a prediction of 'Daniel the prophet,'[1] who was greatly revered by the early Christians. In one of his visions of the night he sees how the kingdoms of the world, pictured in the form of animals, are destroyed by 'One who came in the clouds of heaven, like a son of man,' and to this one, in his 'likeness to a man,' is then given over the everlasting dominion of the world.[2]

We do not here ask what Daniel meant by this mysterious form, nor whence he derived the conception; we set aside also the question whether Jesus himself applied this prediction to his own person. What is certain is that the primitive community recognized in this heavenly man a representation of the Messiah, and the moment they saw in Jesus that Messiah, they applied this passage to him as a prediction, which remained still to be fulfilled. So they pictured to themselves the return of their Lord, in accordance

[1] Matt. 24^{15}. [2] Dan. 7^{13}.

with this passage: 'They shall see "the Son of Man" coming on the clouds with great power and glory.'[1] The 'day, when "the Son of Man" reveals himself,'[2] is described in Rev. 14^{14}. From this point it is only a step to the conception that in the present already the 'Son of Man' is sitting[3] or standing[4] at the right hand of power. To John on Patmos Christ appears in the form of the 'Son of Man,'[5] where various features are mingled together not only from Daniel 7^{13}, but also from the description of the Angel, Dan. $10^{5, 6}$.

But as the primitive community did not hesitate to carry back into the life of Jesus the name 'Son of God,' which strictly speaking was only applicable after his exaltation to dominion,[6] so also with the name 'Son of Man.' It was an extremely significant step that was taken, when the primitive tradition—influenced, no doubt, by words actually spoken by Jesus—put into his mouth, on many occasions, the self-designation 'Son of Man.' The implication was not simply that Jesus by such words predicted or anticipated his future glory, but that then already he was actually *the Son of*

[1] Mark 13^{26}. [2] Luke 17^{30}. [3] Luke 22^{69}. [4] Acts 7^{55}.
[5] Rev. 1^{13}ff. [6] Cf. above pp. 42, 43.

Man. This comes out most clearly in such passages as Mark 10[45]: 'The Son of Man is come . . .' where with the use of this designation a retrospective glance is thrown upon the whole historical appearance of Jesus and the character of his activity is comprehensively judged. This is almost as marked as if the Evangelists had used the term in their narrative, and had said: 'The Son of Man went his way, and did this or that.' This, it is true, does not occur. The Evangelists here all have the right feeling in that they say 'Jesus' in their narrative, and do not yet apply to him a name that would signify a judgment of faith concerning him. But as Matthew immediately speaks of the 'works of the Messiah,'[1] and Luke and John in their narrative do not scruple to say 'the Lord,' it may after all be only by chance that in the Gospels 'the Son of Man' never once occurs in the narrative.

This identification of the historical Jesus with the 'Son of Man' of Daniel and Enoch[2] is very significant, because directly it is accomplished, the further thought can no longer be resisted, that this Jesus of Nazareth is not simply a man,

[1] 11[2]. [2] Cf. below.

who in the future is to be exalted to heavenly glory, but *an original heavenly being, who came down to accomplish this work of his on earth.* But this brings us to a new form of Christology, which comes distinctly into evidence for the first time in Paul.

Chapter II

PAUL

If in the primitive community the inferences from the application of the 'Son of Man' idea to Jesus had apparently not yet been fully drawn, personal memories of his life on earth must have been the restraining force. Beyond the thought of the enthronement of the Exalted One they do not seem in the main to have gone. If, on the other hand, Paul brought that higher 'heavenly' Christology, as we may call it, to its full development, he was able to do this because he was without that wealth of personal remembrance which would have stood in the way of his accepting the thought that Jesus was not really native of the earth, but from the first a heavenly being.

The theme of 'Paul and Jesus' has been often dealt with of recent years (by W. Wrede[1] most

[1] 'Paul.' Rel.-gesch. Volksbücher I $^{5, 6}$, 1905. English translation, 1907.

vigorously of all), and in a way, it must be confessed, that does not meet with the approval of all theologians. In particular, it has been maintained, in an exaggerated fashion, that Paul really had relations only with the heavenly Christ, while of the earthly Jesus he knew practically nothing, and that in any case Jesus played hardly any part in his religious consciousness. The proposition, in this form, cannot be maintained.[1] For it is the peculiar characteristic of Paul's Christology, that he brought the form of one, who had become man and was crucified, into union with the extremely high, superhuman notion of the 'pre-existent' Christ, existing before all worlds. How was that accomplished?

It was formerly assumed that when the Exalted One appeared to him, Paul was led by way of a retrospective inference to the conviction, that he who appeared to him in the radiance of heavenly glory must previously have lived with God in heaven, as the Son of God, before his appearance on earth. Recently, as against this view, Wrede and Brückner[2] have conclusively

[1] Cf. in this connexion the author's essay 'Paul and Jesus.' Berlin, 1909.

[2] M. Brückner, 'The Origin of the Pauline Christology.'

shown that Paul, before his conversion, held the belief as a Pharisee, that the Messiah existed from all eternity with God in heaven; he looked with longing for the day when God should reveal his son,[1] and with passionate energy put forth his whole strength, to realize that righteousness which alone could bring down the Christ from heaven.[2] Then, in the moment that 'Jesus appeared before him in the shining glory of his risen existence, Paul identified him with his own Christ, and straightway transferred to Jesus all the conceptions which he already had of the celestial being—for instance that he had existed before the world and had taken part in its creation. For this there was no need of any operation of the understanding, any reasoned conclusion. So long as he believed that in his vision he had seen Jesus as the Christ, it was inevitable that he should picture him exactly as he had been long accustomed to think of this Christ. The man Jesus was really, therefore, only the wearer of all those mighty predicates which had already been established; but the bliss of the Apostle lay in this, that he could now regard what had hitherto been a mere hope, as a tangible

[1] I Cor. 1^8. [2] Rom. 10^6.

reality which had come into the world.'[1] At the same time, Paul's doctrine of Christ was decidedly influenced by what he knew historically of Jesus. If previously he believed that God would exalt his heavenly son to be ruler over the world and victor over the demons, in a direct ascending line of progress, it was now necessary to correct this picture in accordance with the reality. For in truth God had chosen for his anointed the strange way through the cross to the crown, through the humiliation of becoming man to the exaltation of the Son of God with power! So then the doctrine of the self-emptying and the form of a servant, the humiliation even unto the death of the cross, is, as it were, an interpolation in the pre-Christian picture of Messiah, an addition rendered necessary by the historical facts. For Paul, therefore, the pre-existence of Christ is not a logical inference, but a thing assumed from the first, and consequently not requiring proof.

And so the history of Jesus is traced far back to the ultimate beginnings of all that has happened. Not only had he already intervened in the history of Israel, when, as the marvellous 'rock' in the

[1] Wrede, p. 86. English trans. p. 151.

wilderness, he accompanied the train of the Israelites,[1] and spoke by his spirit through the prophets ;[2] he took part in the creation ;[3] he was the 'first-born' of all creatures.[4] However strangely we may be affected by these statements concerning the person of Jesus Christ, for Paul and later Christendom they were absolutely undoubted facts, which were no stumbling-block to their thought. If Jesus is really the Messiah, everything must be true of him that prophecy and speculation have affirmed of the Messiah. The Christology of Paul then can only be understood when it is recognized that the picture is sketched in a framework already in existence. Let us note the details of the picture.

1. The Son of God

In the fundamental passage, Rom. 1^{3}ff., the name 'Son of God' is the expression which governs the twofold statement that follows. The pre-existent one, who then appears as Son of David according to the flesh, is already 'Son of God' ; but then it is said of him that he is installed

[1] I Cor. 10^{4}. [2] I Peter 1^{11}. [3] I Cor. 8^{6} ; Col. 1^{16} 'all things were created through him.' [4] Col. 1^{15}.

as 'Son of God with power.' This latter statement, a repetition of the first believers' Christology of exaltation, asserts (exactly as 'he highly exalted him' in Phil. 2^9) that through the exaltation something is added to the nature of the Son of God, which he did not originally possess, namely, the dominion of the world. In this second sense, therefore, 'Son of God' denotes the royal, divinely-appointed ruler of the world, the Messiah. What then does the word denote in its first sense?

In several passages: Rom. 8^{32}, 'He spared not his own son'; Col. 1^{13}, 'the son of his love,'[1] stress is laid on God's love for this son. But it would be a mistake to interpret these passages as though 'sonship' were merely another way of expressing 'love'; because God so loved this being, therefore he was the Son of God. The reverse is true: Because he is the son, therefore God loves him.

From other passages it is clear that in the scale of being this son is the one who in origin and nature is nearest to God.[2] These undoubtedly

[1] Cf. Rom. 5^{10}; 8^3; Gal. 4^4. [2] I Cor. 15^{28}; Col. 1^{15}; also I Cor. 11^3.

are notes contributing to the harmony; but they must not be allowed to overpower the keynote. And that note is *new* in relation to what we have already heard. Neither divine dominion, nor a relation of love or trust, not adoption nor a figurative description of moral or natural likeness of being, is here the meaning of 'Son,' but simply, in the common usage of the term, parentage from God. Not in the sense of anything special in the manner of his human birth, for the divine power was anterior to the incarnation; his pre-terrestrial existence had its origin in God, and indeed in a unique manner.

The Old Testament speaks of 'sons of God,'[1] i.e., '*Terminus* of divine nature, who according to Old Testament belief are like God in nature and power, but subordinate.' 'In this connexion it should be specially noted that these beings are never called sons of Jahwe, but only sons of God or of the gods; Jahwe himself has neither wife nor child. From this it follows that belief in such beings had originally nothing to do with the Jahwe religion, but had its proper seat in other lands.' 'Stories which have to do with

[1] Gen. 6^2.

God's sons are in their nature mythological and in their origin probably non-Israelitish.'[1] What applies to these 'sons of God' must be said also of 'the Son of God.' The idea that the God of heaven might have a son can have sprung neither from old-Israelitish soil nor from the genuine monotheism of the later Judaism. We have here an adopted mythological idea. In the Babylonian Egyptian religion, in Hellenistic syncretism, such a conception, so far from being a stumbling-block, was a constantly recurring idea. In the Babylonian mythology, for instance, Marduk is the son of Eas; he is sent by his father to help those who call upon him in their need: 'My son what is there that thou knowest not, that I could still tell thee? What I know, thou knowest also. Go my son Marduk and do that and that'—it is a standing formula in the Babylonian Magic-texts.[2] No one can show that it was just these Babylonian or Egyptian or Greek models which through numberless intermediaries helped to form the Pauline idea. The question as to the particular origin of this conception is not for us of

[1] Gunkel on Gen. 6^2.

[2] Zimmern, *Keilinschriften u. das Alte Testament* [3], p. 372.

so much consequence, if only we have recognized in general its polytheistic, mythological character. In all probability it came to Paul in connexion with a more philosophical theory and through that medium. And it is important to note that when Paul became familiar with this way of thinking it had already lost its distinctly mythological character. Otherwise he certainly would not have adopted it. A sure sign of the disappearance of the mythical is the circumstance that Paul shows no trace of uneasiness nor gives any hint of a tradition as to how the relation of sonship arose, or what its actual significance was. When in Col. 1^{15} he speaks of Christ as the firstborn of all creatures, we must not by any means conclude that Paul had in mind a begetting or birth, or any special creative act. But neither is there in a single syllable any suggestion of an emanation in the sense of the later Gnosticism or an election.[1] It is significant that Paul does not feel the least need to account for the existence of this Son of God by any story of creation or birth, i.e., by what the Science of Religion calls

[1] I Peter 1^{20}, in the sense of Enoch 46^{3}; 'The Lord of spirits hath chosen him, and his lot before the Lord of Spirits hath surpassed everything in uprightness for ever.'

'Myth.' The mythological habit of thought is entirely killed by the monotheistic and by philosophical abstraction. Possibly some remnant, if not of mythical, yet of abstract reflection over this question, is hidden in the statement, still quite dark to us, that God is 'the head of Christ.'[1] We must therefore be content with this result, that the conception of a son, nearer to God than any other being, specially beloved of him and of like nature, was given to Paul, and that he adopted it without much reflection and applied it to Jesus. We shall, perhaps, gain more light from a second conception which goes to the making of Paul's Christology.

2. The Heavenly Man

Here the question again arises: In what class of beings does Paul place this heavenly son of God? From what has been already said, we should expect that he would only grant to him the position of a 'second God' with limitations. He avoids applying to him the predicate 'God.' In Phil. 2^6, he might have said 'Although he was God . . . he became man.' But this the strict

[1] I Cor. 11^3.

monotheist could hardly have brought himself to utter. He says therefore: 'He was in the form of God.' It is very difficult to say what we are to understand by the phrase. Certainly not: 'He was in the inmost essence of his being God,' but only, 'the manner of his appearance, the form of his existence was the same as that of God.' That implies a reservation, that he was something other than God. But then this very passage in Philippians appears also to exclude the idea, that Christ in his pre-existent state was 'Man,' for he only *became* man, when he took the form of a servant. But this is only apparently so. In the expression, 'in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man,' the word 'man' is used in the more limited sense of the earthly man, of whom flesh and blood are the characteristic marks. But Paul's habit of thought permitted him also another idea of 'Man.' As he speaks of heavenly and earthly bodies, so also of a heavenly and earthly man, of whom the former is without just the common distinctive marks of humanity, corporeality and corruptibility.

The classical passage, I Cor. $15^{45, 47}$, has received various interpretations. In v. 47, 'The

first man is of the earth, sprung from the dust: the second man comes from heaven,' the second clause of the sentence might with a measure of goodwill be made to refer to Christ as he should appear again at his second coming; yet we can more readily take the meaning to be parallel with the first half of the sentence, i.e., that 'the second man is (by nature) of heavenly origin.' But v. 45 is quite unambiguous: 'So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.' This proof from scripture affords a second proof ('also') of what was to Paul, on the ground of logic (v. 44), a certain fact, viz., that there is a 'spiritual' body. But the sentence is effective as proof, and proof from scripture, only if not the first alone, but the second half of the sentence is for Paul a word of scripture. It is therefore impossible to take the words, 'the last Adam,' etc., as an independent judgment of Paul's[1]; for in that case the opening construction of the sentence

[1] We have here the same case as in Matt. 5^{43} and Gal. 2^{16}; Rom. 3^{20}, that the really important or demonstrating words are not in the passage of scripture, but are added by the speaker, and yet are intended to be effective as proof, because they are scripture.

must necessarily have been different. Whether on the ground of acquaintance with some Rabbinical interpretation of scripture, or by reason of long familiarity, Paul must have regarded the second half of the sentence as scripture, or at any rate as embodying the meaning of scripture. Now, since the verb ('he became') covers both parts of the sentence, it must in both cases be taken to refer to the same point of time, and cannot therefore in the first instance be applied to the creation of Adam, and in the second to the exaltation of Christ. Consequently the allusion in the second part also must be to the creation of the last Adam. Thus Paul here follows the interpretation of the twofold creation narrative of Genesis 1 and 2, found in the works of the Judæo-Greek philosopher Philo of Alexandria. Instead of taking these two narratives as parallel accounts of the same occurrence, simply placed faithfully side by side by the editor, the text is supposed to relate two acts of creation. As the word, 'The man became a living soul,' stands in Gen. 2^{7}, and is concerned with the creation of him who first appeared in history, therefore the *first* Adam, so Gen. 1^{27}, 'And God created man, in the image

of God created he him,' is concerned with the creation of another man, him, namely, who appeared at the end of history, therefore the 'last' Adam. Here is proof that Paul conceived of the pre-existent Christ as 'Man,' not indeed as man of flesh and blood, but as a 'spirit'-being. Probably 'in the form of God.'[1] signifies nothing else than 'in the image of God'; the pre-existent is called, in Col. 1^{15}, 'the image of the invisible God.'

We must now ask, how the idea of the heavenly man is related to this conception of Philo's, to which we have referred, of a twofold creation of man. There is no evidence of literary dependence, i.e., borrowing from any work of Philo's. A comparison of the two conceptions, however, is instructive. In Philo there are two distinct forms of the conception to be noted.

1. The Platonizing. This is specially prominent in his work on the 'Creation of the World.' According to Philo, God first created the Idea of the World, the '*Kosmos noetos*,' from which, as from a model, he then formed the world apprehensible to sense. Similarly Philo interprets the

[1] Phil. 2^{6}.

double account in Genesis of the creation of man : 'The man "moulded" (or "formed" according to Gen. 2^7) is apprehensible to sense, already furnished with definite qualities, consisting of body and soul, whether man or woman, by nature subject to death.' On the other hand, 'He, who is "in the image" is an idea or general notion or a seal, only to be grasped by the reason, without body, neither male nor female, immortal by nature.' He therefore who is created in the image of God[1] is no more than the idea or notion of man (conceived in truly Platonic fashion), thus, strictly speaking, not an actually existing personal being ; like the plan of a city to be built, in the mind of the architect, the idea of the cosmos, the idea of man, is present in the Creator's thought.

2. But side by side with these Platonizing statements in Philo there are others, which go beyond the mere idea of man. In these Philo speaks in so many words of 'the heavenly man' as distinguished from the earthly.[2] 'The heavenly, who has come into being in the image of God, has no part in what is transient, nor in any earthly existence, but the earthly is formed from

[1] Gen. 1^{27}. [2] *Allegories of the Sacred Laws*, I 31.

scattered material, which he calls "dust." ' Here there is little trace of the Platonic doctrine of ideas, and the impression is that Philo is treating of an actually existent, personal heavenly being. It has been asserted, indeed, that he is here dependent on a Hellenistic myth of the heavenly man, evidence of which has recently been traced out by Reitzenstein[1] and Bousset.[2] There may be some truth in this, for Philo cannot very well have arrived at his theory of the two men by exegesis alone. He found it in the sacred text, because it was already in his mind.

How then does Paul's doctrine stand in regard to these conceptions of Philo's? With Philo's Platonizing view the Pauline doctrine can only be distantly compared. For in his case the characteristic feature of the creation of the man Adam after the model of the heavenly man is lacking. In the passage where one would expect it,[3] it is said indeed that man is 'the image and glory of God,' but we do not find it stated that man is the image of Christ. There may indeed possibly be a thought similar to Philo's hidden

[1] *Poimandres.* [2] *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis.*
[3] I Cor. $11^{3,7}$.

in the sentence: 'The head of every man is Christ, but the head of Christ is God.' One readily perceives that the word 'head' (*kephale*) has here not simply the meaning 'chief.' There is probably at the back of it some expression unknown to us, indicating 'a relation such as a subordinate being may hold, finding in the higher his archetype, his origin, and the purpose of his existence.'[1] Possibly the meaning is somewhat similar to that of the expression 'seal' in the above quoted passage from Philo. But undoubtedly Paul thought of his 'heavenly man' not merely in the Platonic way as idea or notion, but as actual being. Thus he would be more likely to be in touch with those traces of an Anthropos-myth in Philo. But in one point he departs absolutely from it. The Alexandrine does not attribute the least eschatological significance to the heavenly man. He shows no trace of the belief that he who came into being in the image of God, at the end of all things shall appear as Messiah. But with Paul it is just this which is the essential thing. His doctrine of the heavenly and earthly man, or of the first and last Adam, or of Adam and

[1] Pfleiderer.

Christ, is most pointedly apocalyptic in character. It is a special instance of the fundamental apocalyptic dogma, that at the end of time the occurrences of the primitive age must be repeated; as a new flood, a new heaven and a new earth, are expected, so also a second Adam, who is to restore to mankind that which was lost by the first man's sin.[1] Paul's doctrine, by reason of its eschatological-apocalyptic character, cannot be interpreted out of Philo alone or from the Hellenistic Anthropos-myth; though it may have been influenced by these, there must at least have been other contributory influences at work. Chief among them the Judaic conception of the 'Son of Man' must be noted, as found in the 'Similitudes' of the Book of Enoch and IV Ezra 13. This was certainly in existence before Daniel, and in those other two it has taken the place of the earthly political Messiah.

It has often been asserted, indeed, that Paul was not acquainted with the 'Son of Man' idea. This is so far right, that the actual phrase '*the* Son of Man' does not occur in Paul; it *could* not occur, because it is not Greek at all, and would

[1] Rom. 5^{12-19}; I Cor. 15^{22}.

have sounded barbarous and have been unintelligible to his readers. Paul could only have said 'the man,' as indeed he does in Rom. 5^{15}, ^{19}, where 'through one man Jesus Christ' is emphatically opposed to the 'one man' Adam. It is further clear that in I Cor. 15^{27} Paul gives a Messianic interpretation to Psalm 8^{6}, 'Thou hast put all things under his feet.' But he could only do so if he also applied to the Messiah the previous words of the Psalm, 'What is man that thou considerest him, and the son of man that thou takest his part?' who would therefore be for him 'the Man' absolutely, or 'the Son of Man.' This application of the passage of the Psalm is clearer still in Heb. 2^{6}ff. In this connexion it is worth while here to ask whether the strangely chosen words of Phil. 2^{7}, 'in the likeness of men,' 'being found in fashion as a man,' are not an echo of the curious words of Daniel 7^{13}, 'like a man it came.' In any case we are justified in the assumption that Paul was familiar with the conception of the 'Son of Man,' and that it contributed at least a strand to the weaving of his Christology. What is decisive as to the likeness of the Pauline Christology to the conception of the Son of Man in the

'Similitudes' of the Book of Enoch, is the fact that in both cases it is a being celestial from the first, who is destined for the dominion of the world. The patriarch Enoch already, in his progress through the habitations of the just and the resting-places of the saints at the end of the heavens, saw the Chosen One also and his dwelling-place under the wings of the Lord of Spirits.[1] He is chosen[2] to be exalted to dominion hereafter, at the moment, that is, when his name shall be uttered before the Lord of Spirits.[3] In this place an addition is made, to some extent as correction, heightening the statement, to prevent the misinterpretation that the Son of Man was previously unknown to the Lord of Spirits: 'Before the sun and the signs (of the Zodiac) were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits,' i.e., not, of course, simply: 'He was mentioned,' but in this case definitely 'created.' In IV Ezra 13^{26} it is said that the Highest had through long ages treasured up 'the Man.'

We shall not here trace out the origin of this 'Son of Man' idea any further, but content our-

[1] Enoch $39^{6, 7}$. [2] I Peter 1^{20}. [3] Enoch 48^{2}.

selves with the statement that Paul's doctrine of Christ as the heavenly man finds a sufficient parallel in this conception. The last word on this question, it is true, is not thus spoken; further researches and discoveries may bring new light.

When, however, we seek to understand the Pauline doctrine of Christ as Creator and Soul of the world, we must undoubtedly turn to Hellenistic parallels and originals.

3. Christ as Creator and Soul of the World

Our starting-point is I Cor. 8^6, the importance of which is not always sufficiently appreciated. It is in the sentence, 'Christ, through whom all things (came into being), and we through him,' that our special interest lies, and in the corresponding statement concerning God: 'From whom all things (proceed), and we to him'—the two statements being made in relative sentences, as though it were something quite self-evident, requiring no elucidation. The Corinthians must have been already instructed in the subject; an immediate intelligent response is counted on. In particular it is to Paul and his readers a thought by no

means strange, but quite obvious and indeed necessary, that in creation God should have made use of a helper, or intermediary or instrument. The creation story in Genesis does not give the least hint of anything of the kind, and we must repeat that the idea is by no means at home on monotheistic ground. Indeed, it is generally admitted that this sentence could only claim such self-evident validity where the idea of intermediaries between God and the world was familiar. We are referred to the Book of Proverbs, and the opinion is expressed that Paul here assumed the doctrine of Wisdom (feminine) as sharer of the throne and helper of God. In Prov. 8^{22-31} we read :—

Jahwe created me in the beginning of his ways,
As the first of his works of old.
From eternity was I installed,
At the beginning, with the origin of the earth.
Before the primal waters I was born,
Before there were any springs rich in water.
When he spread out the heaven, I was there,
When he made fast the firmament over the ocean,
When he fixed the clouds overhead,
When the springs of the ocean became mighty,
When he set a limit to the sea,
. . . when he set fast the foundations of the earth :
Then was I, as work-mistress, by his side ;
I it was in whom he rejoiced ;
From day to day I rejoiced before his face all the time,

When he rejoiced over the completion of the world,
And rejoiced over the children of men.[1]

Now there can be no doubt that in the Christian community a combination was early established between Jesus and the Divine Wisdom.[2] Nevertheless it remains extremely improbable that on Hellenistic ground Paul would have ventured thus to identify Christ with an intermediary being, regarded as female. The only way in which it might be thinkable would be, that Paul might identify Wisdom with the Divine Spirit, as is already done in the Wisdom of Solomon,[3] so that this would be the really dominant idea. In I Cor. 15^{45} Christ is called a life-giving spirit, and in II Cor. 3^{17} is identified absolutely with the Spirit of God. Of this significant combination we shall later gain a closer knowledge. But in the passage I Cor. 8^{6} there is something more to be assumed. Paul here plays with the prepositions and logical relations (as in Rom. 11^{36}): *Of him, through him, to him*—but it is more than play, there is allusion to a very familiar and common popular scientific mode of expression. Read the 65th Epistle of

[1] Cf. also Ecclus. 1^{4}. Wisdom 8^{4}; 9^{2}.
[2] Cf. Luke 7^{35}; 11^{49}. [3] I^{4}, 7^{22-31}.

Seneca concerning the various inner causes: *ex quo, a quo, in quo, ad quod*; or Plutarch's 'Why the Oracles cease to give answers,' 48; or Philo 'Concerning Providence' 23, or 'On the Cherubim,' M. p.162 :[1] 'As cause of the world you will find God, of whom it came into being; as material, the four elements, out of which it was mixed; but as instrument, the Logos of God, by means of which it was established.' Now a Greek writer who in this or a similar way sets forth the various causes[2] can only have intended thereby to awaken certain philosophical memories; whoever read it, with even slight affinity with the widely-spread popular scientific mode of thought, at the reference to the instrument of creation would at once think of the Logos. So then this passage in the letter to the Corinthians can only be so understood: here Christ has taken the exact place occupied in the Greek system by the Logos.

Clearer still, it must be admitted, is Col. 1^{15-17}. The whole Christological statement, a kind of dogmatic hymn (1^{15-20}), is divided into two

[1] Wendland, ch. 35, §125.

[2] Cf. Zeller, Philosophie der Griechen III. 1, p. 131, note 4. Eng. trans. Stoics and Epicureans, ch. 6.

exactly corresponding strophes (vv. 15–17 and 18–20). The first is again divided into two statements, of which vv. 15, 16a deal with the events of the creation (aorist), vv. 16b, 17, with the present existence of the creation (perfect):

> He is the image of the invisible God,
> The first-born of all creatures;
> For in him everything was created,
> The visible and the invisible. . . . .
>
> All things were created through him and unto him,
> And he is before all things,
> And in him all things subsist.

The two first designations, 'image of the invisible God' and 'first-born of all creatures,' are not merely set loosely side by side without definite connexion, but are both supported by the following sentence of justification ('for in him everything was created'), and bound as with a clamp together: the two, that he is 'image' and that he is 'first-born' hang as closely as possible together. It is not inevitable in the nature of things, that just the first-born should be the image of the father; it would only be so, if all the qualities of the father appeared at once concentrated in him. But this is exactly what is here the case: the Son of God, who came into

being before all creation, is called the image of God, because the otherwise invisible God concentrated in him all of himself that he desired to impart and reveal: 'in him everything was created.' 'In him' must be taken quite definitely and not simply as equivalent to 'through him.'[1] It is an abbreviated way of saying: 'In that *he* was created, everything was in that moment created; he contains everything in himself.' And since the visible world, as is distinctly taught in Rom. 1^{20}, reflects the invisible nature of God, this First-born, who already contains the whole world in himself, may rightly be called the 'image' of God.

But how are we to understand that 'in him' everything was created? It can have no meaning unless Christ is here identified with the Logos. In Philo the Logos, as the aggregate of all the creative ideas of God, already contains the whole world 'in idea,' the *Kosmos noetos*, in itself. Whether Paul had this idea of the *Kosmos noetos* at his command is doubtful or unlikely; but he would seem to have pictured the process to himself more solidly: The Son of God, existing

[1] v. 16b.

before the world, as 'life-giving spirit'[1] actually contained in himself the forces and substances of all existence; thus in a certain sense he himself was already the world. This identification of the Son of God with the Logos, and the Logos with the Cosmos, which affects us so strangely, finds a striking parallel in certain speculations of Philo's, which have recently been placed in a striking light by Reitzenstein.[2] In a series of Philo-passages[3] the Cosmos is identified with the Logos and called the Son of God. This easy transition from the cosmological and conceptual to the personal carries us to Egypt, 'where the world from time immemorial has been regarded as a divine person, and sun and moon are commonly called the eyes of Horus.' So here as foundation we have ultimately a fragment of Egyptian religion or theology, which, however, has passed through the medium of Stoic philosophy. So in Philo also, the *Kosmos noetos* is called the 'elder son' of God, and the actual created world 'the younger son.'[4]

[1] I Cor. 15^{45}. [2] *Poimandres* p. 39ff.

[3] As in Plutarch *de Is. et Osir.* 53f.

[4] *Quod deus sit immutabilis* §31 (Wendland) VI. 'On the unchangeableness of God.' (Bohn I, p. 349).

If now we turn again to the letter to the Colossians, the philosophical foundation is unmistakable. It comes out with special clearness in vv. 16b, 17, where again the play of prepositions indicates the philosophical discrimination of causes. Here the consideration starts from the creation as at present existing (perfect); all things existing as creation in the present 'were created through him (the Logos, as instrument and mediator of creation) and unto him'; that is to say, in the creation all the creative ideas comprised in the Logos find their realization; the Logos, while it is the initial principle of creation, is also its end. Only if the Logos is here the foundation thought can we avoid the interpretation that Christ (and not God) is the end of creation, and this is entirely un-Pauline, in conflict with Rom. 11^{36} and other passages. Only in so far as through the creation the creation-*thought* is realized, is it produced to that end. 'And he is before all things,' not only in time, but also in rank, he is in fact the ruling principle; 'and in him all things subsist.' In these last words it comes out most distinctly that thoughts belonging to the Stoic philosophy underlie this passage.

The very expression 'subsist,' implying that the world is a 'system,' is distinctly of the Stoic school; but above all, the conception that the 'system' is held together by a living reasonable power, that the world has to some extent a soul or reason of its own. All power, all life, all order, all beauty in the world, are referred back to this World-Soul, which is called by the Stoics the Logos, or the Spirit.[1]

Now here for Paul in place of the Logos or Spirit, Christ comes in. It is highly probable that his habit of identifying Christ and spirit enables Paul to transfer to him also the functions of the Stoic Logos. Similarly Heb. 1^3: 'Upholding all things by the word of his power.' Above all, however, we must here compare John 1^3f. This passage also (with the right division of sentences) makes the great distinction between the act of creation (aorist) and the present existence of the world (perfect that which has come into being—the existing).

[1] Cf. Zeller, *Philos. d. Griechen* III. 1. p. 138ff; Eng. trans Stoics and Epicureans, ch. 7; cf. also among others, Galen XIV, 698. Pap. Par. f. 20. l. 1748ff. Pap. Leid. II, 32f. Ecclus. 43^{26}.

> Everything has come into being *through him*
> And without him nothing has come into being ;
> What exists, is life *in him*,
> And the life was the light of men.

What seems to us so strange in this chain of thoughts is the identification of the *person* Christ with the entirely impersonal conception of the world-force or world-soul. How is it possible, we ask, that Paul, who at other times looks up to Christ as to his Lord, to whom he prays, of whom he thinks as a gracious ethical personality, full of loving-kindness, should also attempt to conceive of him under this entirely impersonal category ? It is not sufficient explanation simply to note the difference in Paul, that in distinctly religious moments and utterances it is the person that occupies his vision, while in theologizing he prefers the idea. We have here above all to take into account the extraordinary ease with which ancient thought passes from the personal to the conceptual. The spoken word of a god in Egyptian-Hellenistic-Gnostic thought at once becomes himself a god ; the Romans have in their Pantheon a whole series of ' idea-gods ' ; and on the other hand, how easy it is for the Stoic philosophy to resolve the popular gods into ideas,

how easy for Philo to interpret the persons of sacred history as types or ideas! Sin and Death often appear in Philo almost as persons; and inversely, the Messianic Judge of the world, who in Rev. 19^{11-16} comes down mounted on a white horse from heaven, is at the same time a representation of the Word of God, that judges; he kills men with the sword, which proceeds out of his mouth![1] So we can understand how Paul brings himself to think of his exalted Lord, for whom he longs as one can long only for another person,[2] at the same time as the impersonal power of God, present everywhere as the controlling force of the world. This also explains how he can say, 'The Lord is the Spirit.'[3]

4. 'The Lord is the Spirit'

This is not, indeed, with Paul the only or universally dominant idea. In II Cor. 13^{14}, in a trinitarian formula, he places the Spirit side by side with Christ; in I Cor. 12^{4}ff. distinguishes as clearly as possible the three factors, Spirit, Lord, God; in Rom. 8^{9} he speaks of the spirit of Christ exactly as of the spirit of God. At the same time

[1] Rev. 19^{21}. [2] Phil. 1^{23}. [3] II Cor. 3^{17}.

II Cor. 3^{17} cannot be regarded merely as a solitary, chance expression, which therefore need not be taken seriously. The idea certainly underlies a good deal of Paul's thinking, especially where he feels and speaks as a 'mystic.' The alternation between the expressions, 'the spirit of God or of Christ in us' and 'Christ in us,'[1] indicates a peculiarly fluid mode of conception. The fact that Paul is able to grasp the thought that Christ may dwell not merely in one person but in many, is in itself noteworthy. A parallel may be found in the idea, related also on other grounds to this, that several spirits might dwell in one person (though not one spirit in several persons). Yet in regard to mystical union with Christ, Paul has no difficulty in assuming that Christ dwells in all believers. And when side by side with this we find the other assertion, that all believers are in Christ, that they constitute together the (mystic) body of Christ, that they are all one man in Christ,[2] all this is possible—at least to thought, if not to feeling—only because the clear outlines of the form of the heavenly Lord fade away, and he is merged in the element of the spirit which

[1] Rom. 8^{9}ff. [2] Gal. 3^{28}.

envelopes and flows into all Christians. Just as Christians are represented as being plunged into the spirit, and then again as saturated with it, so are they in Christ and Christ in them,[1] they have put him on,[2] are baptized into him,[3] each individual Christian is *one* spirit with the Lord.[4] This process of 'depersonalization' is not without analogy. Particularly we remember how everywhere in the history of religions mysticism has its correlative in a pantheistic dissipation of the personal idea of God. The form of thought here used by Paul is the same as in the Epistle to the Colossians, where he represents Christ as the soul of the world. It is the conception of the Divine force dominating the whole world, penetrating into every corner of existence, called by the Stoic 'Logos,' by the 'Wisdom of Solomon'[5] 'Divine Wisdom'; in Paul its place is taken sometimes by the Spirit of God, sometimes by Christ himself.

But the relation of Christ to the spirit is not exhaustively expressed by the formula of II Cor. 3^{17}, 'The Lord is the Spirit.' Christ is not always

[1] I Cor. 12^{12}. [2] Gal. 3^{27}. [3] I Cor. 12^{13}.
[4] I Cor. 6^{17}. [5] e.g. 7^{22}ff.

identified with the Spirit absolutely, with the entire fulness of the Spirit, described as the 'summing up' of all spirit. This only occurs in passages of speculative cosmological thought, where his relation to the world is referred to or he appears as the basis of all divine revelation. As spirit is the clear mark of God in the world, and as the Son of God, the heavenly Man, the Logos, is regarded as that side of God which is turned to the world, his complete identification with the Spirit is naturally suggested.

But where the question is not of Christ's place in the Cosmos, but of his person, its special quality, constitution, and origin, he is described rather as a personality belonging to the sphere of Spirit; his actual, primal nature is *Pneuma*; he is a spiritual being among other spirits. Just as in I Cor. 12^{13} the several spirit-recipients find the source of their power and enlightenment in the One Spirit and yet on the other hand in 14^{32} single spirits of single prophets are referred to, so on the one hand Christ is called 'the Spirit,'[1] while on the other hand in I Cor. 15^{45} it is said that the last Adam became (in the act of creation)

[1] II Cor. 3^{17}.

'a life-giving spirit.' Thus he is described as a heavenly being, who, like the angels, has from the first no part in 'flesh and blood.'[1] As the heavenly 'spirits,' the angels, according to the ancient mode of thought, must also have a 'body,' to be able to act, a clearly-marked personal form, a 'shape' as we should say (that is perhaps the best rendering of *soma*), so also Christ before he became man possessed such a heavenly, supernatural 'body' ('shape'), not however of 'flesh,' but what Paul calls a 'spiritual body.'[2] By this he probably means, not merely a body suited to him as a 'spiritual being,' but definitely woven of that fine celestial material for which Paul has no other expression than 'spirit' (*pneuma*). Impossible as it is for us, Paul is able to conceive that Jesus, before he became man (just as after his exaltation) had a body, though not of earthly material, but of that heavenly material, which belongs also to the angels. And he must mean essentially the same thing when he says, he was 'in the form of God,'[3] only here there is the further special thought that he is created after

[1] I Cor. 15^{50}. [2] I Cor. 15^{44}.
[3] Phil. 2^{6}.

the likeness of God. The implication, however, is clear, that Christ in his pre-existence did not as yet bear the form of the earthly man of flesh and blood, but a 'spiritual body,' as became the heavenly Son of God. Another expression for this is 'body of glory' (*Doxa*; Phil. 3^{21}), and so one may also say, the 'divine form' in which he pre-existed was the divine glory, in which he shared as Son, and which he afterwards received again at his exaltation.

5. The Incarnation of Christ

That 'spiritual' form of existence, then, 'in glory' was the only one suited to his rank. It signifies therefore a great renunciation, a voluntary 'impoverishment,'[1] that Christ exchanged his heavenly existence for the earthly. This is his first great deed of love 'for our sake,'[2] the beginning of the work of redemption; here begins what he did, when he 'gave himself for me,' as Paul says with overflowing gratitude.[3] Not Paul alone, but the later Church also, and Athanasius in particular, see in this sacrifice the special 'mystery' of Christianity; this is the keynote

[1] II Cor. 8^{9}. [2] *ibid.* [3] Gal. 2^{20}.

of the ancient celebration of Christmas, which still finds an echo in our hymns :—

> Praise to thee, Jesus Christ,
> That thou wast born a man.
> In our poor flesh and blood
> Is veiled the treasure of eternity.
> In Mary's bosom lies
> What all the world could not contain ;
> He is become a little child,
> Himself sustaining all that is.

That is the sentiment which pervades Bach's Christmas Oratorio ; the ancient Christmas festival is based upon the contrast between the kingly, godlike glory and the lowly humanity of the child in the manger ; to this, and not so much to the birth from a virgin, the words of the hymn refer :—

> If I seek to comprehend this mystery
> My spirit is brought with awe to a stand.

This 'self-emptying' is also for the Apostle the supreme example of humility : Let each one be of the same mind as Jesus Christ ! This is described[1] in the words which have received so many interpretations : 'He counted it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal to God.' What does that mean ? The interpretation must start

[1] Phil. 2^6.

from the remarkable circumstance that here in the midst of none but positive expressions, in which he celebrates the humility and obedience of Christ, Paul suddenly breaks into this negative sentence, and thus the thought is suggested, that it might have been otherwise. The Son of God might also have counted it of so much worth to be 'equal to God,' i.e., to possess divine power and dominion over the world, that he would have 'grasped it for himself.' This must have been, in a sense, a temptation to him; the decision on the side of ambition must have been in some degree open to him, it must have been suggested to him, perhaps by the example of another. But to whom had this 'being equal to God' appeared as an alluring prize, so that he held it worth attempting to 'grasp it' for himself? In all probability it was the first Adam in Paradise, Paul had in mind. To him the serpent held out the prospect of 'becoming as God,' and to gain this treasure he risked Paradise and immortality. How different it was with the second Adam! He was already near to that equality to God, he had a divine form, was Son of God—and yet he did not stretch out his hand to grasp dominion

over the world, but on the contrary even surrendered what he already had; then, as reward for this renunciation, God raised him to the dominion of the world, and gave him his exalted name.[1]

In what then did the renunciation of Christ consist? What was it that he exchanged and for what? In place of the 'divine form' he assumed the 'form of a slave'—that was his self-emptying. 'Of a slave,' says Paul, having still in mind the idea that he might have become a *Kurios*, a Lord. It is a question, therefore, of the change of form (*morphe*), and the process appears to be imagined entirely after the analogy of the taking off and putting on of a garment. As Christians, according to II Cor. 5^{1}ff. (in the corrected text), put off the earthly body (here called a house), in order to put on the heavenly, so did Christ, reversing the order, put off the 'body of glory' and assume the 'body of our humiliation,'[2] the 'body of the flesh,'[3] or simply 'the flesh.' We must not be misled by the expression 'he emptied himself' (Kenosis), as though Jesus in the inner essence of his being had become a different person; the expression

[1] Phil. 2^{9}ff. [2] Phil. 3^{21}. [3] Col. 2^{11}.

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simply affirms quite generally that he gave up a valuable possession in that he undertook a change of 'form,' of the outward condition of his existence. The actual inward nature of Christ remained unaltered in the process; as man, with a body of flesh and blood, he still remained the same person, the 'heavenly man' in earthly garb.

Thus according to the teaching of Paul, Jesus during his life upon earth had a twofold character. Born of a woman, just as any other man, subject to the law, and the spiritual powers ruling over it, like every Jew,[1] derived from the seed of David, begotten therefore by one of the house of David,[2] and in his habit, his appearance and manner, found as a man,[3] so he appeared to men. But that is not all. Only 'according to the flesh' was Jesus a descendant of David; for the rest his origin was from heaven;[4] as a spiritual being he was already in existence at the creation and active therein, 'the first-born of the whole creation.'[5] Strange as it may appear to us, it cannot be otherwise conceived than that here to a certain extent two beings of different order united

[1] Gal. 4^4. [2] Rom. 1^3. [3] Phil. 2^8.
[4] I Cor. 15^{47}. [5] Col. 1^{15}.

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with one another; a heavenly being entered at birth into the body that was in process of growth. There are analogies to this conception, which is so foreign to our modes of thought. The Wisdom of Solomon, e.g., which was known to Paul, taught, after the example of Plato, a pre-existence of the soul. Solomon says:[1] 'I was a goodly child, and a good soul fell to my lot; or rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.' Here undoubtedly pre-existence is taught—one might say, individuality, which thereupon united itself to a suitable body. Differently expressed, we find a similar conception in the pseudo-hermetic 'Poimandres':[2] *Nus* (Reason), the father of all things, which is life and light, produces out of itself the archetypal Man (*Anthropos*), like himself, the image of his father. This 'Man' stoops down to *Physis* (Nature) and is embraced by her in love, he comes down to dwell in the 'form without reason' (*alogos morphe*). 'And therefore man, before all beings of the earth, is of dual nature; mortal of body, immortal as to the true man. Immortal he was, and would have had power over all; but then he had to suffer the doom of the

[1] Wisdom $8^{19, 20}$. [2] Reitzenstein p. 330f.

mortal, subject to fate (*heimarmene*). He was exalted above the Harmony (Nature), but now has become a slave, involved in the Harmony, etc.' What is here said of man in general, would seem to be Paul's view concerning Christ.

One other analogy is furnished by his own teaching. He distinguishes quite seriously in every man the 'inward man,' endowed with reason, obedient to the divine law, from the outward man, the members, the flesh, which as a slave is the servant of sin.[1] And in the case of Christians Paul distinguishes the 'inward' and the 'outward' man. Indeed, it is his conviction, to which occasionally he gives enthusiastic expression, that under the covering of the outward man, which in bodily weakness is worn away, the inward man, through the influence of the Spirit, the life of Christ, gradually ripens for eternal life and glory,[2] so that finally only the mortal covering has to fall away, that the glory of the Christian may be manifest.[3] According to this analogy, it would seem, we may picture to ourselves how Paul thought of the union of the heavenly man with the body of flesh and blood. Only with

[1] Rom. 7^{22}f. [2] II Cor. 4^{16}; 3^{18}; Rom. 8^{11}. [3] Col. 3^{4}.

this difference, that in the case of Christians there has to be a gradual change of the inward man, which only begins with the gift of the Spirit at baptism, whereas Christ had this Spirit from the first. This at least seems to be the meaning of Romans 1^{3}f. He is descended from David, in so far as he is a being of flesh and blood; he is constituted Son of God with power 'according to the spirit of holiness,' i.e., seeing that he did not merely possess the Holy Spirit as a divine gift (like the Christians), but the spirit of holiness was part of his essential being; even after becoming man he was still a spiritual being, but his special characteristic, hardly to be conceived by us, was that this heavenly Son of God, for whose manifestation a 'spiritual body' could alone have been adequate, did not disdain to appear in the altogether inadequate form of a 'body of flesh.'

If one should ask Paul why the Messiah had to enter upon this union, which seems almost contrary to Nature, he would probably reply: Because the Messiah was destined and desired to die, he was obliged to appear on earth in the flesh. Here one sees distinctly how the Christian and historical weft of the Pauline theology adapted

itself only with a certain violence to the warp of the Jewish conception of Messiah. If Paul had remained a Jew, he would not have needed the idea of incarnation. He would have so developed the Messianic drama that the 'heavenly man,' the 'Son of God' would have revealed himself in the glory of his heavenly body, and so have held the last assize and established the final kingdom. But after he had persuaded himself that the crucified Jesus was the Messiah, he was obliged to find means, successfully or otherwise, to effect a union between the spiritual Son of God, and the crucified man, and for this purpose he made use of the distinction between the 'outward' and the 'inward' man. That this is an imperfect mode of conceiving the union of the divine and human is brought out with special clearness when we come to deal with the very difficult point of the relation of Christ to sin.

6. The Relation of Christ to Sin

A complete organic mingling of the 'divine-spiritual' and the 'flesh' raises great difficulties for Paul, since with him the 'flesh' stands in a definite relation to sin. Whether in a meta-

physical-dualistic sense he conceived of the flesh (being matter) as sinful by nature, or from the historical-psychological point of view assumed that since Adam's fall sin had gained dominion over the flesh and now, as dominant power, had made for itself a settled home therein[1]—the flesh in man is in any case at present closely connected with sin; and not merely the several bodies of individual men, but the flesh altogether. Paul's mode of thought is here entirely different from ours. For us 'the flesh' in general is only an idea, existing simply in our thought; only the flesh of the individual man is a reality to us. But with Paul the 'realism of general ideas' is a ruling force, to him 'the flesh' in general is not an abstraction but a reality, a great, powerful existence in life, in which, as members, all individual men by reason of their corporeality have part. And in the same way sin is a great, universal, unitary power, which rules in the whole organism of corporeality. On this account there was for Paul something questionable in the thought that Christ had a body of flesh. For such a 'body of flesh' is for Paul in every other case a 'body

[1] Rom. $7^{18, 20, 23, 25}$; 8^{2}.

of sin '[1] or 'of death.'[2] What follows, then? If Christ really appeared in the flesh, did not his body also stand under the dominion (the law) of sin?[3] This question Paul has not stated in any of the letters preserved to us, but we can hardly suppose that he did not ponder it. His utterances on this point are not entirely clear. One thing is beyond all question, that for him Christ stood under the dominion of the law exactly as the Jews did.[4] This is particularly clear from Gal. 2^{19}f.: 'I through the law died unto the law . . . I am crucified with Christ.' The thought can be consistently carried out only on the assumption that Christ also through the law died unto the law at his crucifixion: previously therefore he stood under the law, and that connexion was severed at the moment when in death and resurrection he parted from his body of flesh. For it is only through the flesh that the law can have dominion over man. The same thought also underlies Rom. 7^{4}: 'Ye were made dead to the law through the body of Christ' (i.e., because the body of Christ is killed, you are liberated from the law). There is sense in that only if at the

[1] Rom. 6^{6}. [2] Rom. 7^{24}. [3] Rom. 7^{25}b. [4] Gal. 4^{4}.

same time it is held that Christ also at one time stood in intimate connexion with the law.[1] But when Paul continues (v. 5): 'When we were in the flesh, the passions of sin, which were called out through the law, worked themselves out in our members'—must not the conclusion be drawn that on Christ also the law exercised this power of leading astray into sin? That he was therefore not only the slave of the law, but caught also in the meshes of the 'law of sin'?[2]

A proof that Christ had positive relation to sin has been found in II Cor. 5^{21}. The words, 'Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf,' are applied by some to the incarnation; the sinless heavenly man, sent by God into the flesh, was made thereby a sinful being. But this interpretation comes hopelessly to grief over the antithesis: 'that we might become righteousness.' Exactly as the reference here is only to

[1] Cf. also Col. 2^{20}, according to which Christ formerly stood among the 'elements of the world.'

[2] An answer in the affirmative seems probable from Rom. 6^{10}. If we accept the construction of the present text, it is there stated that Christ 'died unto sin.' Must he not, therefore, have previously had connexion with sin? For my own part, however, there are other grounds which compel me to regard verses 8 and 9 as an interpolation, so that for me this passage loses its cogency as proof.

an imputed, not a real righteousness (counted for righteousness), so the previous clause can only mean : 'He treated Jesus (judicially) as a sinner' (in causing him to be crucified). It is not, therefore, of the pre-existent, but of the earthly Jesus that Paul declares 'he had no experience of sin.' Altogether, the conclusion would seem to be, there can be no question that Paul attributed entire sinlessness to the Son of God in every phase of his life. Yet at the same time, the close connexion which Paul assumes between the flesh and sin appears to endanger the pure sinlessness of one who assumed a body of flesh. It is, in fact, perfectly open to us to say that for certain aspects of the Pauline doctrine of redemption it seems necessary to assume that the flesh of Christ was no exception to the rule, but stood in positive relation to sin. Here it is Rom. 8^3 above all that has to be taken into account. 'God condemned sin in the flesh,' or better still, 'put sin to death.' This expression can only refer to the crucifixion of Christ. In the view of the opponents, that was a 'putting to death of Christ as a sinner'; since death is the wages of sin,[1] there would

[1] Rom. 6^{23}.

appear to be no other reason for the death of Christ than that he also was subject to sin. But Paul says it was, in fact, the reverse that happened; it was not Christ, but sin, that was put to death. How is that judgment possible? Sin appears in fact at this moment to celebrate its highest triumph! We shall understand Paul's thought only if we remember that when he speaks of the death of Christ, the resurrection is at the same time always in his mind. Every one of his declarations concerning the death of Christ really means death turned by the resurrection into triumph. So it is here. The death on the cross can be called a judgment of sin only because by God's marvellous intervention it was turned into a triumph of God over the apparently triumphant power of sin.[1] What then is the result? Christ is not condemned, for he is snatched away, caught up to God, but the flesh is nailed to the cross. Here again the 'realism of general ideas' is seen in full force. On the cross on Golgotha not the flesh of Christ alone, but the flesh absolutely is put to death, this whole living organism has at this point received its death-blow; with the

[1] Col. 2^{15}.

flesh of Christ all flesh is doomed to death. And in and with the flesh the sin that dwells in it is judged, put to death, and its power destroyed. These are the links of thought which underlie Paul's concise expression. But if sin is to receive its mortal blow in the flesh of Christ, it must have had dominion there also. That appears to be inevitable. Thus we come upon a postulate which for Paul's doctrine of redemption seems unavoidable. If Christ has really delivered mankind from the power of sin, he must have been completely man, he must have been aware of the power of sin in his own body. But this is contradicted by the other postulate, that the Son of God, who came from heaven, cannot have had any experience of sin. There is thus a conflict, the outcome of which is simply to show how impossible it was for Paul's thought, as for any other, to effect an actual organic union between a divine being and human nature as such.

A trace of uncertainty in his own mind seems to be noticeable in one peculiar expression. The first clause of that sentence concerning 'the putting to death of sin in the flesh' runs: 'God sent his son in the likeness (*homoioma*) of the flesh

of sin.' Strictly speaking, the thought which follows demands as antecedent clause, 'He sent him in the flesh of sin,' i.e., in a body that, as with other men, was under the dominion of sin. But this naked and absolute assertion Paul cannot bring himself to make: he introduces a word, the meaning of which in this passage has been the subject of vehement debate. The word is 'likeness'[1] or simply appearance, form, look.[2] What is the word intended to signify?

As in the case of a portrait of some well-known personality one is either struck by the astonishing likeness and identity with the original, or, on the other hand, is inclined to emphasize the fact that it is after all only a portrait, without the actuality of the original, so in this case, the stress is laid now on one side, now on the other. Some say that Paul intends to emphasize the fact that the body of Christ was exactly the same as the flesh of sin in other men; but that might have been much more strongly expressed, if he had simply written 'in the flesh of sin.' Others say that Paul intended only to express a certain

[1] e.g. Rom. 1^{23}, Deut. 4^{17}, Rom. 5^{14}; 6^{5}.
[2] Ezek. 8^{2}. Rev. 9^{7}.

resemblance, a limited similarity. 'In a likeness or copy of the flesh of sin,' which of course remains always no more than a copy, and cannot be identical in all points; in which case it goes without saying that the limit of the similarity is reached at sin;—the body of Christ was copied from the flesh of men, apart of course from sin. But of this exception there is absolutely no trace (as there is in Heb. 4^{15}); so that the expression, to say the least, would be ambiguous. Nor is there a syllable of suggestion (though it is often read between the lines) that by his will Christ overcame the sin which no doubt was present in the flesh. Nevertheless, the feeling underlying this interpretation is right, that Paul would not have chosen this expression, if it had been possible for him to say, 'in the flesh of sin.'

A third possibility still remains open to us: that *homoioma* means simply appearance or form, without the further implication that it is copied more or less exactly from a model, and an added genitive need not imply dependence on the conception of 'making like,' 'copying' (Gen. obj.), but may just as well simply describe the character of the appearance or form, what it looked like.

The word *homoioma* is used particularly in connexion with supernatural appearances: e.g., in Deut. 4^{12} it is said of the revelation on Sinai: 'Ye saw no form (appearance), only the voice (ye heard).' Ezek. 8^{2}: 'I looked, and behold the form of a man.'[1] Rev. 9^{7}: 'The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for war.' This use of the word is the same as in the passages where, e.g., it is said of the Son of Man: 'He looked like a man.' Here the underlying thought is that heavenly beings, if they are to become visible to human sight, must assume some form or other. And in this sense we must understand the saying that God sent his Son 'in the form' of the flesh of sin. That is to say, the heavenly Christ went so far in condescension, that he chose for the form of his appearance 'the flesh of sin,' which is under the dominion of sin. It would be an unwarranted weakening of the phrase to assume that this flesh was without sin; at the same time the Christ who makes his appearance in this fashion naturally remains inwardly entirely untouched by sin, since the form of flesh remains a thing altogether external to him, which

[1] Kautzsch: 'an image that looked like a man.'

he has simply 'assumed,' like a mask or disguise. Here it becomes quite clear that Paul does not assume an organic fusion of the divine with the human. The union is purely temporary in character, and is dissolved again by death. But the question, whether in the life of Jesus the influence of the flesh may not after all have resulted in sin, Paul does not propound; it was to him absolutely unthinkable. Nor does he seek refuge in the thought, that Jesus by his will overcame the temptations to sin. The two parts of his being, flesh and spirit, do not come into sufficiently intimate contact for any such need to be felt. In other words, we must affirm that Paul simply cannot clearly think out an actual and complete 'incarnation' of the heavenly Christ.

Of this, finally, Phil. 2^7 is proof. Here he should have said, 'he became man, and was in his entire habit a man.' But such an unrestrained mode of expression he avoids here also; he only says, 'he appeared in human form, and in his bearing was found as a man.' That is to say, he looked like a man, he behaved like a man, and even on closer examination nothing was found to belie his humanity. But this very mode of expression

makes it evident that all this is only the outward form of his existence, that he was in truth more than a man; that his inward being did not correspond to the outward. It is not difficult to recognize here the germs of the later 'Docetism,' according to which Christ was held to have had only a phantasmal body, or the Gnostic doctrine, that the heavenly Aeon Christ descended into the man Jesus, to leave him again before death, so that it was only the man Jesus, who actually suffered. Paul himself would have vehemently resisted these inferences, for the humanity, the suffering, the death of Christ are to him experiences of the entire person, which again, in his view, should be conceived wholly as a unity. But it is not to be denied that the two passages above quoted very readily suggest a docetic interpretation. Here we clearly see once more Paul's difficult position, and his difference from the primitive community. If with them he could have regarded Jesus simply as a prophetically inspired man, who after death was exalted to God, these difficulties would not have arisen. But his problem was to unite the conception of the heavenly Christ with the tradition of the crucified

Jesus, and this was possible only at the expense either of the human or the divine (he wants to keep both unimpaired), or at the expense of the organic unity of the personality. The result was a hybrid form which already contained the foundations and anticipations of all possible heresies, and almost all the Christological problems of the future.

Let us look back for a moment at the Christology of Paul. We do it injustice if with cold objectivity, as we have done, we unravel its distinctions, which are full of contradiction and seem so strange to us We must not forget that these ideas, which no longer mean much to us and which of our own motion we should never think of using, were for him and his time of the highest vitality, expressions of the highest values. He had *felt* them, he wanted by their means to express something that moved him to the very depths of his heart. When he attempts with fine and not altogether convincing distinctions to produce a definition of the divine in human form, for him that is a sacred aspiration of the heart. For him salvation depends on the fact that Jesus really lived and suffered, and yet must

have remained all the time the supernatural Son of God. And if he identifies him with the Logos, that again is to him a vital question for Christianity. If the Greeks aim at comprehending in that word what next to God is highest in the world, it must be shown that what they speak of falteringly with only dim surmise has gained for the Christians a living, personal, visible form in the Saviour: 'We Christians are your equals in our conception of the world, we also believe in the divine in the world; but we surpass you, for what you speak of in cold, abstract fashion as the Logos, we are permitted to know and name, to love and adore, as our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Thus we reach the emotional ground of those theoretical declarations, which must always be borne in mind, if we would understand Paul. In that passage of Christological exposition in the Epistle to the Philippians, we recognize the glow of feeling in every word, and the Christological excursus in the Epistle to the Colossians can only be understood, if it is read as an exulting hymn, in which Paul outbids the Gnostics, who would rob Christ of his honour. But above all, everything he teaches concerning Christ stands

for him in most intimate connexion with the living, personal image of the Lord, who is ever near and immediately present to him: 'The life I still live in the flesh, I live in faith, i.e., in most intimate devotion, love, thankfulness, to him who loved me and gave himself up for me.' To him he belonged body and soul, him he served with self-consuming ardour, to him he felt every moment responsible, in all things dependent upon him. This *life* of his in Christ we must take into account, if we would be just to his *doctrine* concerning Christ and not give a one-sided judgment. In every such presentation of a system of Christology, in fact, there must be added to complete it a picture of what Jesus signified in the personal life of the dogmatist in question. If this had always been borne in mind, Christological controversies would have been less bitter. And today, we may be sure, the different schools of thought would be more easily brought into harmony, or at any rate would come to a better understanding, if they refrained from driving one another apart with Christological formulas and compared together the actual religious positions they hold.

Chapter III

CHRISTOLOGY AFTER PAUL

As we have already found in Paul the main features of the Logos-Christology, there is not much that is new to be learnt from the doctrine subsequent to him. It does not astonish us to read that Christ was already chosen (by God) before the foundation of the world,[1] that through him God created the world, and that he upholds all that is by the word of his power,[2] that he, like the divine Wisdom,[3] is spoken of as 'the effulgence of the glory of God and the image of his being.'[4] All these expressions, like the frequent declarations of the Johannine Prologue,[5] are only further proofs of the fact that primitive Christian teaching grasped eagerly at the Logos-doctrine (most strikingly elaborated in Philo) in order to

[1] I Peter 1^{20}; cf. Enoch 46^{3}; 48^{6}. [2] Heb. 1^{2}f. ^{10}.
[3] Wisdom 7^{25}f. [4] Heb. 1^{3}. [5] John $1^{1, 3, 18}$.

express the divine, absolute, world-embracing character of the revelation of God in the person of Christ.

There are, however, points of real significance for us in the New Testament literature subsequent to Paul. We notice first of all how the men of the primitive Church were led through debate with certain Gnostic tendencies, partly to formulate peculiar speculations, outbidding those of their opponents, and partly to go back with great literalness to the firm foundations of the old tradition concerning the life of Jesus. On the one hand we see how the Christ speculation loses itself in the clouds, on the other, how the memories of the life of Jesus are brought into increasingly definite and more concrete form.

1. 'Deutero-Pauline' Literature

In the Epistle to the Colossians, opposing the false teaching of certain Gnostics, Paul had already emphasized with the greatest energy the world-embracing eminence of Christ, exalted in particular above the angels. When he asserts that all things, in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers,

are created in him, that he is the '*Arche*,' 'beginning,' 'origin' (implying, it would seem, the Alpha and Omega, the original principle and ultimate goal of the world), that he united even the angelic powers with God,[1] those are anti-Gnostic declarations, not clearly comprehensible by us, because we do not know enough of the doctrine of his opponents. To these declarations must be added, that in Christ the whole 'fulness' (*Pleroma*) of the Divine nature dwells bodily;[2] while the false teachers assumed that the fulness of the Godhead was poured out upon the whole host of the angels or spiritual powers (they were all bearers of revelation, mediators and bringers of salvation), Paul's teaching is that God has imparted himself entirely and finally only to his Son, in him the whole wealth of the divine nature is contained. This is the same conception of the divine revelation as in the expression 'image of the invisible God,' and in Philo's doctrine of the Logos. God, in himself invisible and unapproachable, has poured his whole nature into this revealer of his; whoever is 'in him,' whoever possesses him, has thereby secured not only re-

[1] Col. 1^{16-20}. [2] 1^{19}; 2^{9}.

demption,[1] but also all knowledge of God, for Christ himself is 'the mystery of God, in whom all hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge are contained';[2] 'in him' one receives a share in the divine fulness.[3] These thoughts of Paul's, which already go a good deal further than the Apostle's usual mode of expression, a writer of his school, the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians, took up and carried to a yet higher plane, giving them a new interpretation.

The introductory section[4] at once strikes a distinctive note; here the frequent repetition of 'in him' causes surprise: *in him* has he chosen us from the foundation of the world, *in him* he determined on his gracious purpose of salvation. The pre-existent Christ is here in the writer's mind: from the beginning God thought of him and called him into life for the one purpose of realizing through him the salvation of the world; from the very first he had no other purpose with regard to him but finally to 'sum up' all things or all beings in him, as in one living whole; all streams of life were to flow together in him, all beings are taken up into his life. That is a

[1] Col. 1^{14}. [2] 2^{2}f. [3] 2^{10}. [4] Eph. 1^{3-14}.

carrying out of the Pauline thought 'all things have been created for his sake.'[1] But the author of Ephesians has gone further and united this group of thoughts with a mystical speculation as to the 'Church' (*Ecclesia*). Paul, in I Cor. 12^{12}, had already given to *Ecclesia* the meaning 'body of Christ,' implying that all Christians are united to one another and with Christ, through the one Spirit, dwelling in all, as the same blood flows through all the veins of the body; thus they form together one living organism, of which each one is a member, and the whole is Christ himself, whose spiritual being, like a wide mantle of many folds, embraces all his own. But in this connexion it is not the special thought of the world-embracing activity of Christ that Paul has in mind; in this embodiment with his community there is rather a self-limitation of his being. To him, undoubtedly, the 'body of Christ' is the organism of greatest consequence in the universe, but that it embraced the whole world was not Paul's thought, when he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. It is, however, distinctly the favourite idea of the Ephesian letter: Christ 'fills,' penetrates 'all

[1] Col. 1^{16}.

things in every part with his being,' and thus the Church, which is his body, is that which 'fulfils him,' i.e., the content of his being.[1] In other words, the Church, as the 'body of Christ,' takes just the place which otherwise 'Wisdom' or 'the Logos,' or 'the Spirit of God,' or Christ himself occupies, as the power of God ruling throughout the world. The *corpus mysticum*, formed by the union of Christ with his community, is appointed to absorb all beings in a measure into itself. This mystery, 'Christ and the Church,' is the central idea about which the thought of the writer of the Ephesian letter revolves.[2]

In comparison with these soaring fancies the Christology of another writer of Paul's school, the author of the letters to Timothy and Titus, makes an impression almost of bareness. It is just because he has to fight against a fantastic gnosis, that he feels the importance of recalling Christendom to the sound basis of the traditional Christianity of the Church: 'Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, born of the seed of David,'[3] 'who before Pontius Pilate witnessed

[1] Eph. 1^{23}. [2] 2^{15}; 2^{20}ff; 3^{10}; $4^{12, 15}$f. 5^{23}f.; 2^{5-33}.
[3] II Tim. 2^{8}f.

a good confession,'[1] the 'one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.'[2] But side by side with these we find other tones. Thus we read in I Tim. 3^{16} the fragment of a Church hymn, in which it is said: 'manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit.' This reference to the manifestation of himself to men under the condition of a body of flesh reminds us of Paul; that it did not represent his inmost being the next line makes clear; it was recognized as a 'justification,' a rehabilitation, when he returned once more to the spiritual state. While the writer therefore lays pointed stress on the fact that Jesus was *man*, he at the same time holds emphatically that he was of divine origin; nay, if we have the right text, in Titus 2^{13} he calls him in so many words 'Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.' But even if we had to read or interpret this passage in a different sense, there is one expression, which the writer is fond of using, which throws light on the subject: he speaks in II Tim. 1^{10} of the '*Epiphany*' of the Saviour. Every Greek reader, familiar with this word, could only take it here to mean that

[1] I Tim. 6^{13}. [2] I Tim. 2^{5}f.

in Jesus Christ a God in human form appeared on earth. As they spoke of the *epiphany* of a god, when he appeared to men, to order the building of a temple or the establishment of a festival, or to confer benefits; and as Antiochus IV of Syria was called '*Epiphanes*,' as a god sojourning on earth—so with this writer the expression implied the *incarnation of a God*.

2. The New Testament Picture of Jesus

We have seen the development of Christological doctrines in their main features pass before us. But the picture would be incomplete, if we did not add that the old communities, in addition to the elaboration of a theological doctrine concerning Christ, felt it to be of the utmost importance to keep the clear image of Jesus vividly in their midst. The faith of the old community did not by any means simply pass into the abstract Logos-idea of Paul and the later theologians, nor into the dogmatic theory of incarnation and redemption; nor is the question here simply of the worship of an impalpable heavenly deity, still less of a divine power abstract and impersonal; the essential and distinctive thing in this new

religion was that with the idea of Messiah or Logos was united the concrete conception of a person. Its longing for redemption had not to reach out into an endless, unknown future, it already *knew* the Saviour, in hearty, intimate relation with him ; the impress of his living form had given them courage to believe in redemption ; when the old communities lifted up their thoughts to the Exalted One, they had before their eyes a clear image of him to whom they prayed. For either they belonged to those who themselves had seen Jesus, or stood under the influence of the tradition of his deeds and words.

The preservation of this tradition was in the main the work of the oldest community in Palestine. We owe to it practically the whole of our authentic knowledge of Jesus ; that this tradition in spite of many an embellishment and many a legendary accretion is yet at the heart of it reliable and effective, is due to the fact that the Christology of the primitive community was still in its essence very simple. The exaltation to divine glory, it must be remembered, came to Jesus only after his death ; during his activity on earth he was indeed equipped with spirit and power from above, but

yet a man. Thus human memories of him could still be cherished with love and faithfulness and without too decided idealization. Not that something of the radiance of the Exalted One would not be reflected back into his earthly life; but taken altogether, the picture that we owe to the love and faithfulness of the first disciples is convincing and truly human. That the gatherings of these first Christians, their conversations and their quiet hours in the upper chamber, were filled with remembrance of the Master, that they sought encouragement from his words, sustained themselves by his example, and longed for his love, we may assume, though we have no direct witness to that effect. For if they had not lived so faithfully in the past, they could not have handed down to us so rich and splendid a treasure of the words of the Lord and narratives concerning him. For us the task remains, ever fresh in attractiveness, by no means yet accomplished, of reading the Gospels, not as dry chronicles of the life of Jesus, but as records of the intimate faith of the old communities. We must consider, as we read, the character of the material they selected from the great mass of tradition—their favourite

passages; we should see from what they relate what aspects of the personality of Jesus appeared to them of greatest consequence, how the temper of his spirit was reflected in their souls. To follow out this line of thought would carry us too far; but let anyone make the attempt so to read the Gospels, and he will find that they grow luminous with new light.

It has often been noticed that with Paul the specific memories of the life of Jesus remain in the background. He was not himself one of the companions of Jesus in the wanderings through Galilee; what he knows of the life of Jesus, he has received from tradition. Yet this statement is often made with exaggerated and one-sided emphasis. Not the amount of what Paul knew about Jesus alone is under-estimated, but also the reality of the interest he took in the earthly life of Jesus. We have noted the great stress Paul lays on the humility of Jesus, on his obedience unto death; we read in Romans 5^{12}ff. how over against the fall of Adam into sin he sets the well-doing of the man Jesus; we cannot doubt that he thought of the whole course of the life of Jesus as illumined by love. And when he says:

'In the night in which the Lord was betrayed,' that implies exact knowledge of the events which led up to the arrest. When we consider that among Paul's comrades was the man who so soon after his death wrote the earliest Gospel, it becomes a most improbable assumption that the material which Mark had at disposal for his narrative could have remained unknown to him.

At the same time it cannot be denied that Paul makes little use in his letters of this information. It is more in accordance with his whole manner of thought to present the life-work of Jesus as centred in the two great actions, the taking of the flesh as man and the death upon the cross. To him, indeed, the earthly life of Jesus was only a step of transition, and all details of what he did and taught, the individual proofs of his love and the stages in his path of suffering, are of little moment beside that beginning and that end. Whatever particulars he may have related in his missionary preaching, he always returned to the cross as the crown of all.

But the life of the Gentile-Christian communities could not do without fuller knowledge of Jesus; the piety which was to be built up in his likeness,

needed a vivid image, with definite features, definite words. And so we see how the post-Pauline literature reaches back in ever-growing measure to the memories of the life of Jesus.

The writer of I Peter, aiming at edification, is glad, we find, to make use of such features. He has not indeed so rich a store at his disposal as an eyewitness of the life of Jesus, for he is not Peter himself, but a pupil and admirer of the Apostle. But for the suffering and oppressed Christians he describes with warm and lively feeling the unmerited suffering of Christ,[1] his patience, his silence before his judge ;[2] he attempts undoubtedly to give them some clear impression of the sufferings of the Lord.

The Epistle to the Hebrews makes even more decided use of this method. Here the incarnation is the matter of supreme interest.[3] The heavenly, eternal 'Son,' the 'Son of Man' foretold in Ps. 8, has been placed by God for a time 'lower than the angels.' It was necessary that he should be 'in all things like unto' men, that he should not only assume flesh and blood, so that he might taste of death, but also endure the same tempta-

[1] 1_{19} ; 2_{22} ; 3_{18}. [2] 2_{23}. [3] Hebrews 2.

tions as we ; only so could he become the merciful high-priest, who could have sympathy with our weakness.[1] Most powerfully the image of the human Jesus rises up before us when we read that ' in the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death,'[2] and through suffering had to learn obedience.[3] As originator of the Christian faith, as the patient, obedient vanquisher of suffering, he is pictured,[4] for the readers' comfort and example. These separate vivid features stand out luminously from the abstract learned theological background of the letter as a whole. It furnishes an admirable instance of how a writer, aiming at practical edification, found Christology alone insufficient, and felt the need of setting the image of Jesus in concrete, winning light before his readers.

Thus we are brought to the time when the community clearly required a consistent picture of the life of Jesus. The first apostles and eyewitnesses had passed away ; the fluid stream of tradition by word of mouth must be guided into a settled channel : so the first Gospels arose.

[1] 4^{15}. [2] 5^{7}. [3] 5^{8}. [4] 12^{1-3}.

Their authors were none of them eyewitnesses, but men of the second generation, anxious to preserve the priceless treasure left them by the first. But as regards Christological dogma, not one of them any longer holds the position of the primitive community. The 'exaltation Christology' has long since been outstripped by the 'incarnation Christology' of Paul. And it is an altogether unique spectacle, to observe how the evangelists from their dogmatic standpoint have solved the by no means easy problem of producing a convincing picture of Jesus of Nazareth. We must be prepared from the outset to find that they cannot entirely forget their Christology. Its influence will be felt in their picture, and thus arises, as we should expect, an intimate union between the Christological doctrine of the Gentile-Christian missionary church and the traditional image of Jesus of Nazareth, inherited from the primitive community.

3. The Christology of the Gospel of Mark

This is already the case in the oldest gospel preserved to us, that of Mark (A.D. 64–68). Some of the supporters of the literary priority of Mark,

it must be confessed, have been a little too confident that in this 'oldest Gospel' we possess a pure deposit of the historical remembrance and tradition of Jesus, still uncorrupted by dogmatic Christology. They have underrated the Christological element, which already blends with Mark's delineation. On the other hand, the danger of present-day criticism is to interpret the work predominantly as a Christology put into narrative form (in something of the same way as it is supposed the Gospel of John may be understood). These are both one-sided views which misconceive the actual position, and simplify the problem in a way that is not permissible. That the Evangelist starts from a definite Christology is certain. How could it be otherwise with a writer, who, after Paul's work was done, set himself at the close of the first Apostolic generation, to write down the 'Gospel of Jesus Christ' for the practical use of the mission to the Gentiles. On the other hand, every thorough analysis of the work shows that the author does not create and freely mould his own material, but has taken over a tradition, already moulded to a certain degree, and makes it available for the practical purpose of his teach-

ing. To this end he partly interprets in a higher sense, or gives an altogether new interpretation, and arranges and groups his material from points of view not of biographical history but of his doctrine. The interpreter of the Gospel of Mark is faced by a double task: in the first place to understand the writer from the point of view of his own thoughts; then to investigate the material used and attempt to arrive at its original meaning, its source, and its credibility.[1] If in this way he investigates not only Mark but the later writers also, he will find (even in John) that side by side with an extremely high Christology much that is ancient and original has been preserved. And this juxtaposition of genuine remembrance of the man Jesus of Nazareth and Christological doctrine has been rich in blessing for the Church throughout its history. The Church would long since have perished amid the Christological conflicts, if the ineffaceable image of the personality had not again and again recalled it to its vital purpose, if Jesus had not ever anew directed those

[1] Cf. in this connexion the author's work: 'The Oldest Gospel,' Göttingen, 1903, and his Commentary on the Three Oldest Gospels in the 'Schriften des N.T.'s.'

who believed in him from himself to the Father.

The Christology of the writer of Mark is already expressed in the title. His gospel treats of Jesus Christ—'the Son of God,' if these last words are genuine. The use of the double name is significant. The term 'Christ,' as is already manifest in Paul, has here lost its national-political meaning, and has become a proper name, a sign that the author is living among Gentile Christians, for whom the Jewish Messiah as such has no longer any meaning. That does not prevent Jesus from being repeatedly called Messiah in the course of the narrative,[1] where Jews are speaking; for the Evangelist realizes that historically, among those who were about Jesus, the question was discussed, whether he was the Messiah or no. The use of this name is therefore in accordance with fact. So also Mark keeps true to history by speaking always in his narrative only of Jesus, never of Jesus Christ. He feels quite rightly that the double name became possible only in the confession of the later community, but not during the lifetime of Jesus.

The names which for him rightly designate

[1] 8^{29}; 14^{61}; 15^{32}.

Jesus are 'the Son of God' and 'the Son of Man.' That the evangelist so often puts the latter name into the mouth of Jesus in self-designation shows that he has no longer any suspicion that this name is really fitting only for the heavenly Messiah, whether as pre-existent or as exalted. For him the Jesus who goes about on earth is none other than the 'heavenly man,' who came down from heaven and is again exalted to heaven,[1] whence he will come again upon the clouds with great power and glory.[2] Consequently he allows Jesus to speak of himself as the Son of Man, even where he is speaking of his activity on earth,[3] of his suffering,[4] and of his resurrection.[5] In this respect the source of the discourses had already led the way,[6] and Matthew has gone still further in this substitution of 'Son of Man' for 'I' in the mouth of Jesus.[7] This use of the name is a conclusive proof that Mark, like Paul, regarded Jesus as the 'Man' who had come down from heaven. Nor can it be doubted that this post-Pauline writer understood the name 'Son of God,' which perhaps already appeared in the superscription of

[1] 14^{62}. [2] 13^{26}. [3] $2^{10, 28}$; 10^{45}. [4] e.g. 8^{31}. [5] 9^{9}.
[6] Matt. 11^{19} = Luke 7^{34}. [7] Cf. Matt. 16^{13}, with Mark 8^{27}.

his gospel, as the most significant title of honour, in the same sense as Paul himself, namely, not in the old theocratic sense previously alluded to,[1] as of one chosen and called to dominion as Messiah, but of one[2] who alone among men is by nature an embodiment of the actual being of God.

A clear conception of his view may perhaps be gained from the solemn confession of the captain beneath the cross: 'Truly this man was a son of God.'[3] The Gentile is not, of course, thinking of the Chosen One of God; what he means is, 'This man in his origin is from the gods.' To understand such a popular conception we must have gained familiar knowledge of the various forms and shades of meaning in which the ancients were accustomed to think and speak of 'divine men' or 'gods in human form.' We find here much variety and fluidity of thought, and until we can examine the evidence as a whole it is hardly possible to come to a certain conclusion. Only one thing is clear, that what we have here is not the conception, so widely prevalent, of a man, the son of a mortal woman, but begotten of a god. The captain's words, at any rate,

[1] p. 37f. [2] p. 65. [3] 15^{39}.

give no hint of such an idea, and Mark cannot know anything of a miraculous birth, for otherwise he would speak of it. Jesus to him, as to Paul,[1] is 'son of David.'[2] Only one thing gives us pause, when we read in the current text of Mark :[3] 'The carpenter, the son of Mary,' without mention of Joseph ; but Matthew[4] and Luke[5] appear to have read in their copy of Mark the 'son of Joseph' or 'of the carpenter.' The really significant thing is that he does not reflect at all upon the question how this 'man' could be 'son of God.' Manifestly it does not appear to him unthinkable that a man, who in his whole outward mode of existence had the appearance and manner of a man, was yet in truth of divine and heavenly origin. It would perhaps be unwarranted to attribute to the Evangelist the Pauline conception of a spiritual being from heaven, who merely assumed a human body—the fine distinction between the 'outward' and the 'inward' man is certainly quite foreign to his mind. He is simply a man of thoroughly antique feeling of the ordinary kind, who finds no difficulty in the assumption that a divine being took flesh (became

[1] Rom. 1^{3}. [2] 10^{47}. [3] 6^{3}. [4] 13^{55}. [5] 4^{22}.

incarnate) in a man—we can hardly avoid the use of that expression. And further, it is certainly no longer his own conception, as Evangelist, that the baptism of Jesus was the determining point in his divine sonship. For the voice from heaven appears in his narrative in the form already weakened from Isaiah xlii. according to which Jesus in that moment was not 'begotten' as son of God,[1] but only acclaimed as such; the voice from heaven merely recognizes an already existing fact. But that again is a clear indication that Mark was not himself the creator of this narrative; for in connexion with this view of his, what meaning could the voice from heaven have for Jesus? It simply declares a thing long since known to him. The original purpose of the narrative[2] must have been to announce the divine sonship as something new to Jesus himself; it must therefore be older than Mark.

One sees from this example how with him the earlier tradition comes into contact with the later Christology, without producing a pure note of harmony. The 'adoptionist' Christology of vocation is no longer truly at home on post-Pauline

[1] Luke 3^{22}. [2] Cf. above, p. 42.

ground. Or is it possible that for Mark the 'descent of the Spirit upon him'[1] signified the actual beginning of the divine sonship of Jesus, making him thus the forerunner of the Gnostics, who represented the Aeon Christ as entering into Jesus at the baptism. From that interpretation we recoil. In any case it is not clearly suggested by Mark. Thus he leaves us in doubt when we ask, how did the divine sonship arise, and how could the divine nature be united with the human Jesus? The fact of such a union he simply takes for granted.

On the other hand, it is clear that the divine sonship or divinity of Jesus was something not easily recognized. This 'mystery' was revealed only to the disciples,[2] and the demons know it by virtue of their supernatural intelligence,[3] but from the masses of the people it remains concealed —the one bright exception being the captain at the foot of the cross. Thus the divinity of Jesus must have been a possession in some way concealed and interior to Jesus himself.

The contact of an earlier conception with an advancing Christology may be noted at a few

[1] 1^{10}. [2] 4^{11}. [3] 3^{11}; 5^{7}.

more points. As the baptism of Jesus in the old tradition had a different meaning from that which Mark attached to it, so in all likelihood the transfiguration also. The original meaning doubtless was, that to the disciples after the bold anticipation of their acknowledgment of the Messiah, he was for a moment revealed in his future Messianic glory. No clearer indication could be given that he did not at that time possess the 'Doxa' (divine glory), for it was necessary to that end that he should be 'transfigured.'[1] But if one reads the narrative in Mark's sense, one cannot absolutely exclude the interpretation frequently advanced, that the Evangelist meant to show how at that moment the inward and hidden glory of Jesus became luminously manifest. The miracles of Jesus, which in the earlier tradition are really regarded rather as deeds of God through Jesus,[2] still appear in this light in 2^{12}, 5^{19}. While in Matt. 12^{28}, Luke 4^{14}, 5^{17}, the spirit or power of God appears as the actual agent (especially in the driving out of demons), in Mark curiously enough there is hardly ever any reference to the 'Spirit' to account for these 'deeds of power.'[3]

[1] 9^{2}. [2] Acts 2^{22}. [3] 6^{2}; 5^{13}.

In 5^{30} the ' virtue that went out from him ' might indeed be the Spirit of God, but the expression seems rather to suggest a power of his own, conceived as almost physical in character. And for the rest, Jesus accomplishes his deeds by a word or touch, by some popular medicinal means, or even simply by his will. In the feeding of the multitude, for instance, or the walking on the lake, the narrator no longer feels it necessary to ask, how it was possible ; it is for him a matter of course that such things should be done by Jesus or should happen to him. He tells of them with naked simplicity, without making much of them, as though it could not be otherwise. Here already the conception of a divine all-powerful personality is dominant, which later we meet in the Gospel of John. The more noteworthy is it, that in the Gospel of Mark features of the old tradition are still preserved, in which certain limits to the power of Jesus are emphasized : in Nazareth he can perform no miracles.[1] The Evangelist is certain that Jesus knew beforehand of his future, his suffering and resurrection, in all particulars,[2] yet he retains the saying that not

[1] 6^{5}. [2] Esp. 10^{33}f.

even the Son knows anything of the time and hour of his return.[1] The sinless perfection of the Son of God is not emphasized, simply because to the Evangelist it is entirely a matter of course; nevertheless he cannot refrain from telling that Jesus submitted himself[2] to the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,[3] that he was 'tempted,' and that he refused to be called 'good.'[4] For the Evangelist, as for Paul, the achievement of the Son of Man culminates in the giving of his life as a ransom for many;[5] so that the story of the sufferings is not merely the most detailed part of his work, but from the first the object of the whole delineation. Nevertheless he has retained many of the features of the earlier tradition, in which Jesus appears as 'Teacher,' as a readier scribe, of loftier spirit, as 'prophet,'[6] as herald of the kingdom of God,[7] as plenipotentiary of God,[8] and in such proclamation and works of healing finds the real task of his life. In short, beneath the Evangelist's general dogmatic conception the human image of Jesus of Nazareth constantly shines through.

[1] 13[32]. [2] 1[9]. [3] 1[4]. [4] 10[18]. [5] 10[45].
[6] 6[4]. [7] 1[14]. [8] 1[22].

4. The Christology of Matthew and Luke

In the Christology of Matthew and Luke, as compared with Mark, various delicate shades of meaning appear; but they do not concern us here. It is, however, important to note that the rich material of the discourses, which they have taken up into their work, is calculated as a whole, in contrast to their main dogmatic conception, to strengthen the impression that we have to do with a prophetic personality, inspired by God and entirely dependent upon God. The prominence given to the *praying* of Jesus especially in Luke,[1] but also in Mark[2] and Matthew,[3] makes particularly in this direction. This feature of the Gospel story, above all the picture of the conflict in Gethsemane, is for all time a powerful counterpoise to the Evangelists' idealizing, deifying way.

But Matthew and Luke have made another special contribution to the Christology of primitive Christianity, by bringing the birth of Jesus into the circle of their presentation and theological reflection. Indeed, they introduce two features which, as a matter of fact, neutralize one another.

[1] 3^{21}; 5^{16}; 6^{12}; $9^{18, 28}$f.; 11^{1}; $22^{41, 44}$. [2] 1^{35}; 6^{46}; $14^{32, 35}$.
[3] 14^{23}; 19^{13}; $26^{36, 39, 42, 44}$.

On the one hand, through their mutually contradictory genealogies[1] they attempt to establish the descent of Jesus from David—an attempt with intractable material, calculated rather to throw doubt upon the whole matter. This in both cases points to a Jewish-Christian element in the picture, while in Luke the whole birth-story originates in this Jewish-Christian Messianic dogma.[2] In the second place, they both explain the divine sonship of Jesus as due to his birth from the Spirit: 'Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, that shall be begotten, shall be called "Son of God."'[3] Here one sees quite distinctly how the name 'Son of God,' already firmly established in the use of the communities, which in 1^{32} still appears entirely in the old oriental sense, receives a new explanation, as due, that is, to a miraculous manner of birth. Such an interpretation of the name would most readily suggest itself to the Greek Christians. For in the religion and popular conception of the Greeks the belief was very widespread that men of commanding gifts and achievements, such as

[1] Matt. 1^{1-17}; Luke 3^{23-38} [2] 1^{32}; $2^{4, 11}$. [3] Luke 1^{35}.

Alexander the Great, Plato, Pythagoras, were sons of a god, by a mortal woman.[1]

There was nothing repugnant to the Greek mind in the thought that their favourites were the fruit of an actual divine begetting. But this conception, with its naïve and far too human reference to the life of sense, the Christians of course did not adopt. The very idea of God held by the Jews, exalted above all that is human, in itself rendered that kind of notion inadmissible. Still less could the transfigured, pure and ethical belief of the first Christians in God as Father adopt the heathen thought in its unmodified original form. Only after a certain transforming adjustment did they venture to speak of a divine birth of Jesus. What happened was conceived according to the analogy, e.g., of the birth of Isaac, who was begotten[2] not 'after the flesh' but 'from the power of the Spirit,' came into being, that is, through an incomprehensible creative miracle of God.[3] Thus Matthew says[4]

[1] Cf. rich material in Usener, Zeitschrift für N.T. Wissenschaft, 1903. Vorträge u. Aufsätze. Art. 'Nativity' in *Ency. Biblica.* Also Petersen's Religionsgesch. Volksbuch, 'Die Wunderbare Geburt des Heilandes.'

[2] Gal. 4^{29}. [3] Rom. 4^{17-22}. [4] 1^{18}.

that Mary 'was found with child of the Holy Spirit,' and Luke[1] speaks of the mysterious wonder of this occurrence in images of delicate periphrasis, concealing rather than making it clear. So a new way was found of explaining the 'deity' or 'divinity' of Jesus. Strictly speaking, this conception, which has the advantage of being suited to popular apprehension, excludes the Pauline idea of the pre-existence of Christ. For in the miraculous birth the divine Sonship arises as something new, which did not before exist; if, on the other hand, as Paul teaches, the heavenly Son of God, who was before the world, takes a form of flesh, the birth of this man signifies nothing with regard to the origin of the divine Sonship—on the contrary, it merely adds the human to the divine.

5. The Gospel of John

We are not surprised, therefore, that in the Gospel of John, which lays so much stress on the pre-existence of Jesus (especially in the Prologue, but also in the numerous passages which are

[1] 1 [35].

concerned with the 'coming down from heaven') nothing is said about the 'birth from the Spirit.' There has, indeed, been a strong desire to vindicate the genuineness of the reading 'who was begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man,'[1] but however ancient the reading may be, the thought is absolutely out of place in the connexion of the Prologue. We repeat, then, that the Fourth Evangelist makes no mention of the miraculous birth. On the other hand it is beyond question that he knew of this conception from the earlier evangelists, and that it was known to his readers. Under these circumstances his silence signifies, not indeed that he wished to controvert the idea (even so he could not have rooted it out!), but rather that it did not appear to him true or satisfying. When in his Gospel the Jews call Jesus 'the son of Joseph,'[2] that is, of course, in the Evangelist's view, a sign of their defective understanding. Their mistake, however, does not consist in regarding Joseph as father (John apparently had no wish to deny it) but in thinking that so they have comprehended

[1] Cf. Th. Zahn's Commentary on the passage.
[2] 1^{45}; 6^{42}. Cf. also 7^{27}.

the whole matter. He may or may not be Joseph's son; that, in any case, does not indicate his real nature. How he was humanly born is quite immaterial; the essential thing is that he came from heaven.

If we ask how 'John' thought of the incarnation, we do not get any clearer answer than from Mark. Only this is clear, that he was strongly opposed to the Gnostic idea that the heavenly Christ united himself with Jesus only at the baptism, to leave him again before the death. No, the personality, which bears the name Jesus Christ, went through water and blood, through baptism and death.[1] He sets himself against all docetic refining away of the true and complete humanity, when he chooses the almost 'coarse' expression: 'The pre-existent, heavenly, divine Logos *became flesh*,'[2] he actually changed himself in the fullest sense into a being of flesh and blood; he was acquainted with weariness[3] and thirst;[4] above all, actually and beyond question he died,[5] and actually rose again with bodily form complete.[6] But however strong the aversion in John from Docetism—although he not only allows Jesus

[1] I John 5^{6}. [2] 1^{14}. [3] 4^{6}. [4] 19^{28}. [5] 19^{33}f. [6] $20^{20, 27}$.

to be called a 'man' by others,[1] but makes him speak so of himself[2]—at the same time in the most decided way he characterizes him as 'God.' It is not merely that he passes over in silence too decidedly human features such as the baptism and temptation of Jesus, Gethsemane, etc.; he says distinctly that the eyewitnesses of the life of Jesus saw in him who had become flesh the divine glory,[3] that through his signs he manifested his glory.[4] How it was possible that this essentially divine possession, the exclusive endowment of a heavenly, spiritual being, could be manifested in a being of flesh, is not a subject on which he seems to have pondered—it is to him simply a marvel for reverent contemplation! One thing only is clear, that with equal energy he defends both positions: truly become flesh, and yet in complete possession of those qualities, which constitute the nature of the Deity. Therefore also he does not hesitate, not merely to say of the pre-existent Logos, he was God,[5] but to allow the Risen One in bodily form to be addressed by Thomas as his 'God.'[6] Nay, he himself without

[1] 3^{27}; 4^{29}; 5^{12}; 7^{46}; 9^{11}; 10^{33}, and elsewhere. [2] 8^{40}. [3] 1^{14}. [4] 2^{11}; 9^{3}; 11^{4}. [5] 1^{1}. [6] 20^{28}.

hesitation calls the Exalted One 'the true God.'[1] Here the level of the earlier primitive Christianity, and the limit beyond which Paul in his Christology was careful not to go, is overstepped.

The comparison with Paul is on all grounds instructive. For him Christ's work of salvation is concentrated in the self-sacrifice of the death on the cross; for that cause Christ was obliged to exercise the self-abnegation of becoming man. Therefore the doctrine of the '*Kenosis*' (self-emptying)[2] is so important to him. Herein he proves himself the advocate of a religion of redemption, which could only be based upon a tremendous sacrifice. Now, in so far as John occupies the position of this Pauline doctrine—and it is evidently of great importance to him ('the Lamb of God, who bears the sin of the world'!)—he needs the incarnation as the condition of this sacrifice. But that is not the real centre of gravity of the Johannine theology. John is the representative of a *Religion of Revealing*: knowledge of God,[3] to see God,[4] that is the supreme treasure of his piety. And thus in the life of Jesus the vital thing is that he *shows the*

[1] I John 5^{20}. [2] Phil. 2^{7}. [3] 17^{3}. [4] 14^{9}.

Father to men. His task, as 'only' Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, consists in unveiling the mystery of the invisible God.[1] This he accomplishes by his words and his works—both of them not his own, but 'given him of the Father,' as is again and again emphatically said. In particular, he exercises the two great functions of God, the raising of the dead, and the judgment already here on earth.[2] But he not only reveals the Father in word and deed, he represents him directly—in his own person: whoever has seen him has seen the Father.[3] Whoever knows him need no longer wait for the hope of a distant future, in which God will reveal himself to his human children; the great and final manifestation of God is already accomplished in him. In particular, the two great cardinal properties of God, 'grace and truth,' have in him visibly, corporeally, personally appeared on earth.[4]

The significance of this Johannine representation of Christ for church, theology, and piety, cannot be too highly estimated. It has had the most potent determining influence, not on dogma alone, but above all on the mind of the people.

[1] 1^{18}. [2] 3^{19}f.; 5^{21-30}. [3] 14^{9}. [4] $1^{14, 17}$.

Wherever the 'revelation of God in Christ' is spoken of, the Gospel of John is the standard authority for such a view. And even the more recent theology since Schleiermacher, in the degree in which it has been 'Christocentric,' finding its revelation in the 'historical Christ,' the determining facts of salvation in his personal life, has rested for its support, consciously or unconsciously, on the Gospel of John. The Synoptic Jesus, with his eschatological announcement of the kingdom, his Messianic outlook towards the future, has therefore always seemed to it remote, and in fact only tolerable, because the Synoptic picture was contemplated through the coloured glass of the Johannine Christology. And so with the piety of the people, their conception of the Lord Jesus, exalted and irradiated with heavenly light, is entirely dependent on the Gospel of John, and does not so easily feel at home with the more austere, more historically true and human picture of the Synoptics.

But this unmistakable preference, one might say, this love of the Johannine Christ, would not exist, if he were really the cold, impersonal, abstract divine image so often sketched for us by

the critical school. It is frequently overlooked that there are also in the Gospel of John warmer, simpler and more human features, by which the statuesque nature of the image is materially softened. The tears and the prayer at the grave of Lazarus must not indeed be included in this reference ; they serve, on the contrary, to intensify the impression of something artificial and superhuman. But there are other features. How often, e.g., it is brought out in the discourses, that Jesus knew himself to be dependent on his Father in all he did and said :[1] 'He can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do';[2] 'I can of myself do nothing ; as I hear, I judge. . . . I seek not my own will, but the will of him that sent me.'[3] To do his will is his meat ;[4] it is as needful to him as daily bread ; but in it he finds also his complete satisfaction ; he needs nothing else. Repeatedly, with ever fresh variations in the theme, we have descriptions of how his whole inner life depends on union with his Father. And when the Evangelist, as is frequently the case, draws a parallel between the

[1] Cf. Joh. Weiss, Nachfolge Christi, p. 45ff. p. 54ff.
[2] 5^{19}. [3] 5^{30}, cf. 5^{43}. [4] 4^{34}.

union of the disciples with Jesus and the union of Jesus with his Father, he has transferred his relation to God from the chilling sphere of metaphysics to that of religion, and so brought it nearer to religious feeling. Here, in particular, the line of thought should be brought out (which has gained such great significance in the theology of A. Ritschl) that Jesus can be certain of the love of his Father on one ground alone, and only so long as he does his will.[1] This is an assertion of the ultimate truth, that the union of Jesus with God depends on moral conditions; not that through his conduct he had in the first instance to gain his Father's love—it was there from the beginning—but that he can *retain* it only on the one condition, that he makes the will of God his own. This is the religious and human side of the Johannine Christology. For this reason alone Jesus is to him the perfected revealer of God, because the loftiest relation of union with God, in which a human being can stand, was completely realized in him. The sentence 'He that hath

[1] 8^{29}; 10^{17}; 15^{10}: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.'

seen me, hath seen the Father,'[1] is elucidated by this other: 'Do ye not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but the Father who is in me doeth his works.'[2] Here the conception of the inspired prophet, intimate with God, coalesces completely with that of a manifestation of God in human form. And on this duality the religious fascination of the Johannine picture of Christ depends.

And now in conclusion we can answer the question whether the Logos-idea, with which the Prologue opens, is of fundamental importance to John. Undoubtedly he starts from the identification of the Logos and Christ, found already in Paul; like Paul, he teaches the participation of the Logos-Christ in creation, he thinks of Christ as source of all the life of the world.[3] But in what follows hardly any further stress is laid on the Logos-idea. One gets rather the impression that John started indeed from the well-known doctrine, but for the rest sought new forms of expression. And further, it is probable that the Logos, which originally signified the divine Reason and vital

[1] 14^{9}. [2] 14^{10}. [3] 1^{1-4}, and p. 89.

energy in the Cosmos, was interpreted by him in the sense suggested by the beginning of Genesis: 'In the beginning was the Word,' i.e., Jesus, not only in his discourses, but in his entire person, is the incarnate *revelation of God.*

The course we have traced has brought us a long way: from the Jewish-Christian political idea of Messiah to the doctrine of the heavenly Messiah and Son of God; from the adoptionist Christology of the Exalted One, to the doctrine of the pre-existent 'Man' and 'Son of God,' and to the Logos-Spirit-Christ; through the difficult questions of the incarnation, to the conception and representation of the Gospels. The impression we have received as a whole is that primitive Christianity made use of forms and conceptions already existing, to give expression to the overwhelming impression made by the personality of Jesus, in a manner within the reach of popular comprehension, but at the same time absolute and not to be surpassed. The search was for predicates which would affirm that in him the ideal and the supreme religious treasure were to be found. To the mind of the ancients the

predicate of deity would always suggest itself anew for this purpose. It was applied in various forms to Jesus. Hence the problem of the true humanity, clearly delineated in remembrance and tradition, which must not be lost. The attempts at solution were very incomplete, and constantly raised new questions. A succession of unspeakably complicated and extremely unedifying controversies were the result, until the famous formula of conciliation, 'one person in two natures,' was discovered, which, however acutely it may have been thought out, yet can never satisfy. For the question will ever be renewed, in what way it is really thinkable that deity and humanity could be united in one person living on earth.

To the modern man, the more earnest the desire with which he strives after clearness and certainty, the more strange and uncongenial must all those Christological formulas appear—for this, if for no other reason, that they are the outgrowth of the altogether different soil of ancient thought. It was quite easy for one of the ancients to think that a man was in truth an incarnate deity, as for instance the Roman Emperor or Antiochus Epiphanes, or that Plato was the son of a god;

but for us it is impossible, since we realize too keenly the impassable frontier line between the divine and the human.

What we learn from all those stammering attempts to express the nature of Christ in formulas is simply, how mighty the personality must have been, that inspired men to such faith, quickened their imagination to such an extent, and for centuries furnished food for their thought. The less we are able to understand the Christology and appropriate it to ourselves, the more decisively are we referred back to Jesus in his own personality. To understand him, to gain a clear impression of his character, to suffer ourselves to be drawn by him into his life with the Father, must mean more to us than the finding of a formula of faith, with which we might be at once dogmatically correct and true to history.

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